



Kidney Q&A

4-12 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program
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Q: How can I talk to others about the feelings I have?

A: When you're on dialysis, it's easy to think of yourself as different from other people. You may isolate yourself from your friends and family—just when you need them most. If you hold your feelings inside, they tend to build up and upset you. Dealing with these feelings can help you relate better to others.

It's common to be under stress for the first year of dialysis. When your kidneys failed, you may have felt as if someone close to you died. Your social worker has special training to help you cope with the life changes and stresses you live with. He or she wants and needs to know what you're feeling, and can help you talk to your family and friends.

Talking about your feelings helps you to accept them for what they are—just feelings. Once you accept them, you will be able to work through them and move on to accepting the new you. Yes, life is different—but it can still be good!

What I can do to feel comfortable talking about my feelings:

- Get to know someone else on dialysis who has coped well.
- Talk to my social worker, the National Kidney Foundation, or the American Association of Kidney Patients to find a support group near me.

- Seek help from a professional counselor when I need it.
- Get *Just the Facts: Depression* from Life Options at or www.lifeoptions.org.
- Visit module 5 of Kidney School™: *Coping with Kidney Disease* at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more about what I can do to cope with kidney disease.