



Kidney Q&A

4-12 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program
414 D'Onofrio Drive, Ste. 200
Madison, WI 53719
www.lifeoptions.org

Q: What do I do if I disagree with some of my medical care?

A: At the dialysis clinic, a team of health care providers work with you: most often, a nephrologist, social worker, dietitian, nurses, and technicians. Each one knows his or her field. But they don't know what it's like to be inside *your* body. You need to help them understand what it is like to be *you*.

You have rights—and responsibilities: You have a right to understand your care plan—and the task of asking questions and learning all you can. You have a right to refuse any treatment—but to do this safely, you need to know what will happen if you do. You have a right to change doctors or clinics, too—and the job of clearing your choice with your insurance plan.

How to respond when you don't agree: Talk and act with respect, as you would want others to talk to you. Write down your concerns. Ask to meet with your doctor or other members of your care team to talk about your treatment. This will give you all time to discuss your concerns fully so you will feel good about what you decide.

Ask questions to understand the treatment:

- What is happening in my body that led to the treatment suggestion?
- What is the research behind the treatment?
- Who will do the treatment and what is their experience with it?

- What can the treatment help? How can it hurt?
- How much does the treatment cost, and is it covered by my insurance?
- Will I need to be in the hospital to have the treatment?
- How long does it take to get better if I have the treatment?
- What will happen if I postpone or refuse the treatment?

What I can do if I disagree with my medical care:

- Ask questions until I fully understand my treatment options.
- Know my rights and responsibilities and follow them.
- Write a list of my concerns in as much detail as possible.
- Contact my local ESRD Network to ask for guidance. I can find my Network by asking my social worker or visiting www.esrdnetworks.org.
- Visit module 14 of Kidney School™: *Patient Responsibilities and Rights* at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more about my rights.