

IV. Environmental Precautions:

- **If your unit does re-use of artificial kidneys, check to see that your name is on the kidney before starting dialysis.**

Why: This is to make sure that the kidney belongs to you.

- **Check to see if the correct dialysis bath is at your machine.**

Why: To make sure the right dialysis bath ordered for you is at the machine.

- **Talk with the nurse or technician about what to do in case of an emergency. The nurse or technician will go over this with you.**

Why: Emergencies can happen at a dialysis center, home, or other places. Knowing what to do may help you during an emergency.

V. Traveling Precautions:

- **You should have a back-up plan for a ride to take you to and from the dialysis center. Sometimes your scheduled ride can't come.**

Why: This will help you to receive your treatment as scheduled.

- **If you want to travel and need to have dialysis at another center, let the nurse and social worker know this ahead of time.**

Why: This will allow enough time for dialysis staff to schedule a treatment for you.

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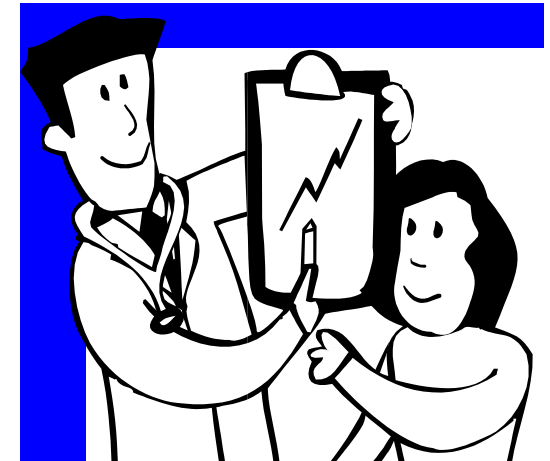
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**PATIENT SAFETY IN THE
DIALYSIS UNIT:**

THE PATIENT'S ROLE



As a dialysis patient, you can take an active part in working with the doctor and staff at your dialysis facility. Please read the following safety precautions.

Following these precautions may help you function better on and off dialysis.

I. Treatment Precautions:

- **Do not adjust the controls of the dialysis machine unless you are told to do so. Touching the controls will change the settings of the machine.**
Why: The nurse or technician sets the controls based on what the doctor orders for you.
- **Tell the dialysis nurse or technician if you are feeling sick, dizzy, or weak.**
Why: This will alert the nurse or technician that you may be having a problem.
- **If you have diabetes, watch your diet and check your blood sugars at home. Tell the nurse or technician if your blood sugars are high or low. Also, tell them if you are having vision problems, or any skin color changes or sores on your body (especially of the hands and feet).**
Why: Early reporting will help you to limit problems caused by diabetes.
- **Bring a copy of your discharge instructions to the dialysis unit when**

coming from a hospital or doctor's office.

Why: The doctor and/or nurse may need to make changes to your treatment plan.

- **Do not keep your bloodline connections covered with clothing or a blanket during dialysis.**
Why: The nurse or technician can make sure that your bloodlines stay connected during treatment.

II. Access Precautions:

- **You should be shown how to take care of your access. This is usually a fistula, graft, or catheter. If the access is a fistula or graft, you should not wear tight clothing or jewelry on the access arm.**
Why: Pressure on the access site can decrease the blood flow through your access.
- **Follow doctor's orders on how much weight to lift with the creation of a new access in your arm.**
Why: Lifting too much weight with the new access arm, before it heals, may injure the surgical area inside your access.
- **Tell a nurse or technician if you notice the absence of a pulse at the fistula or graft site.**
Why: This will alert the nurse or technician that there may be a problem with your access.

- **If the access is a catheter, the skin area should be kept clean, dry, and covered.**
Why: This will decrease your chance of getting an access infection.
- **Check to see that the nurse or technician is wearing gloves and a mask when working with your access.**
Why: To protect you from infection and to protect the nurse or technician from possible blood contamination.
- **You should not touch the skin area or supplies when the nurse is working with the access.**
Why: To decrease your chance of getting an access infection.

III. Medicine, Food, and Fluid Precautions:

- **Follow a prescribed plan of taking medicine, food, and fluids.**
Why: A nurse, doctor, or dietician can answer your questions about medicine, food, and fluids. Following a prescribed plan will help you to feel better on and off dialysis.
- **You should talk with a nurse, doctor, or pharmacist before taking "over the counter" medicines or herbal remedies.**
Why: Some medicines can cause problems with other medicines you are already taking.