

Dialysis is a treatment that cleans your blood by removing waste and extra fluid when your kidneys cannot. Starting dialysis is a life-changing experience, and it's normal to feel a wide range of emotions.

The First30 Checklist is designed to help you keep track of the various members of your healthcare team and consider questions you may want to ask them.

Dialysis involves many different health care practitioners and allied health professionals to help support you. Your dialysis care team may include:

- **Nephrologist:** Manages your overall kidney health and plans treatment, medicine and dialysis schedule.
- **Nurse Practitioner (NP)/Physician Assistant (PA):** Works closely with your nephrologist to manage your kidney health and can make changes to your prescription medicines.
- **Nurse:** A specialized Registered Nurse (RN) who works closely with your dialysis care team to administer your dialysis treatments, monitor during dialysis sessions, and educate you about your condition and treatment.
- **Social Worker:** Supports you and your caregivers to learn how to cope with kidney disease, adjusting to the changes that come with dialysis, learn about transplant, find community resources for financial assistance, transportation, home health services, nutrition, and more.
- **Dialysis Technician:** Operates and monitors the dialysis machine and equipment under a nurse's supervision.
- **Renal Dietitian:** A specialized nutrition expert who provides an individualized plan to help you navigate what to eat and drink to manage your health conditions when you are on dialysis.

Fill in information about your dialysis center and providers below for a quick reference.

My Dialysis Treatment Center:

Phone:

Address:

Nephrologist:

Name

Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant:

Name

Nurse:

Name

Dietitian:

Name

Dialysis Technician:

Name

Social Worker:

Phone:

Email:

NEPHROLOGIST, NURSE PRACTITIONER, AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT



DIALYSIS

- What is dialysis?
- What happens during dialysis and how will I feel afterward?
- How often and how long will each dialysis session be?
- What are the different types of dialysis?
- Which type of dialysis is best for my lifestyle?
- Am I a good candidate for home dialysis?



MEDICINE

- What new medicines will I need to take?
- Do I need to stop or adjust any medicines prescribed by my other doctors?
- What about over-the-counter medicine?



TRANSPLANT

- What is the process of getting a kidney transplant?



VASCULAR ACCESS*

- What kind of vascular access do I currently have, and will that change in the future?
- How do I take care of my vascular access and prevent infection?

*the process of gaining entry to your bloodstream to administer dialysis

SOCIAL WORKER



COPING AND SUPPORT

- Where can I find support for adjusting to life on dialysis?
- What mood changes should I watch out for?



INSURANCE

- What does my health insurance cover?
- What programs can help pay for my living expenses?



TRANSPORTATION

- Can I drive myself to dialysis?
- What are other transportation options?



TRAVEL

- How can I arrange dialysis if I travel?
- Will my insurance cover dialysis treatments at a different clinic?



MY DIALYSIS CLINIC

- Are there any rules I need to know about the dialysis clinic?
- What can I do to keep busy during my dialysis sessions, and can I have visitors?
- How can I reschedule if I miss a treatment session?



DIALYSIS TREATMENT

- What should I wear for treatment?
- Can I eat or drink during dialysis?

DIETITIAN



HEALTHY EATING

- What changes do I need to make to what I eat and drink?
- How much fluid can I have each day?
- Are there tools or apps that can help me keep track of what I eat and drink?



COOKING

- Where can I find kidney-friendly recipes?
- What seasonings can I use? Which ones should I not use?



POTASSIUM AND PHOSPHATE BINDERS

- What are “binders” and what do they do?
- What kinds of binders do I need to take and when do I take them?
- What happens if I forget to take my binders?

