



Patient & Family Guide
2017

Acute Hemodialysis



www.nshealth.ca

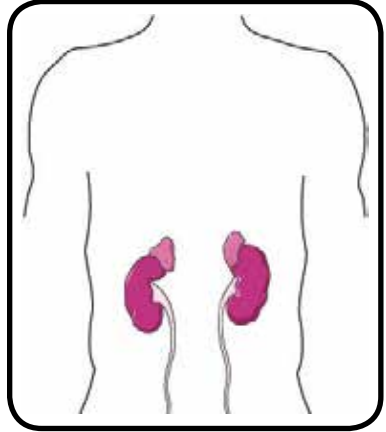
Acute Hemodialysis

Why are my kidneys important?

Kidney function is essential for life.

The kidneys:

1. Remove extra water from the body or keep water in the body when needed.
2. Remove waste products and balance body minerals.
3. Make hormones that help balance some body functions (such as blood pressure, calcium levels, and making red blood cells).



How will I feel if waste products and fluids build up in my blood?

You may have some or all of these symptoms:

- › Feeling very tired
- › Weakness
- › Sick to your stomach
- › Bad taste in your mouth
- › Itching
- › Problems sleeping
- › Forgetfulness
- › Shortness of breath
- › Swelling

What is acute kidney failure?

Acute kidney failure is a sudden loss of kidney function (your kidneys stop working). Kidney damage may be reversible if it is caused by a serious injury from shock, trauma, an accident, medication, or obstruction (a blockage).

What is dialysis?

Dialysis is a life-saving treatment which takes away waste and extra water from the blood.

What is hemodialysis?

When the kidneys fail, hemodialysis is a life-saving treatment used to clean the blood of waste products and extra fluid. Blood must leave the body, go through the artificial kidney (filter) where it is cleaned, and then return to the body.

What are your questions?

Please ask. We are here to help you.

How long will I be on hemodialysis?

Hemodialysis may only be needed for several weeks until your kidneys have time to recover. There is a chance that your kidney function will not recover and you will need dialysis on a long-term basis.

How often will I need hemodialysis?

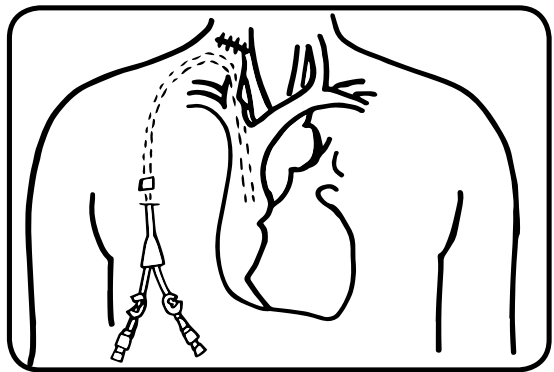
Waste products can build up quickly. Dialysis is needed 3 times or more a week. Each treatment lasts about 4-5 hours. Your nephrology (kidney) team will check your bloodwork and then figure out your need for dialysis. Each person has different needs.

What are non-tunneled/tunneled hemodialysis catheters?

These catheters give access to the blood for hemodialysis treatment. A catheter is a tube made of special plastic.

- A doctor puts the catheter into a large vein in your neck or chest. Sometimes it may need to be placed into a large vein in your leg.
- Usually you will have 2 stitches in your neck or groin to hold the catheter in place.
- You may notice that the catheter has 2 lumens (tubes) coming from your neck or chest;

however, there is only one catheter inserted under your skin.



- One lumen is used to carry blood from

your body to special tubing that is connected to the dialysis machine where it is cleaned.

The cleaned blood is returned to your body through the other lumen.

A non-tunneled catheter is used as a temporary access for hemodialysis. A tunneled catheter may be used for a much longer time. This catheter is put in place by a radiologist in the X-ray Department.

Living with kidney disease

Hemodialysis treatment can cause many daily challenges for you and your family. These may include diet changes, activity changes, and feelings of uncertainty, disbelief, helplessness, or anger. Most people go through a period of adjustment. There are resources to help you deal with these changes.

Resources available to you

Nurses, doctors, social workers, dietitians, peer support volunteers, and spiritual care workers are available to support you as you deal with the changes caused by hemodialysis. Please talk to a member of the nursing staff if you have any questions or concerns.

The Kidney Foundation of Canada (KFC) has many resources, including “Living with Reduced Kidney Function” and “Living with Kidney Failure”. These resources are free of charge. They will be given to you at your follow-up visit with the nurse.

You can also find them on the KFC website:
www.kidney.ca/manual

Follow-up

If your kidney function is not reversible, you will have a visit in about 3-4 weeks with a registered nurse who will talk with you about your dialysis options. You should be feeling better by this time. It will now be easier to learn about your current treatment and other home treatments that may be available to you.

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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If you have any questions, please ask your healthcare provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.