

# Coping with Dialysis

When you have chronic kidney disease, you may eventually need dialysis, a major life change that requires extensive planning and can be difficult to cope with.

*"I think it's extremely helpful for most patients to have that network whether it's family or friends. I think it just helps the patient go through the process because it's a big life changing event."*

– Dr. Aaron Dall Nephrologist/Kidney Specialist

*"Dialysis is almost like working a part-time job."* – Venus, Patient

Venus Dickinson found out she needed dialysis one year ago, a huge adjustment to her lifestyle.

*"Follow the rules. Make sure you take your medicine. Make sure that you get plenty of rest. Have very good family support. If you have problems, talk to somebody about it."* – Venus, Patient

Having support is critical for any dialysis patient. It can come from many your health care team, family and friends. Social workers also play a very important role, especially at the start of treatment.

*"They help us find what is the best place for the patient to get dialysis, what is close to home, what is convenient for them, who they want to see when they're on dialysis. Do they want to see the same doctor?"*

– Dr. Aaron Dall Nephrologist/Kidney Specialist

*"Each of us have our own roles and mine is to really help explain to the patient what they can expect emotionally and physically as their treatment begins. And to refer them to the professionals on the team if they have questions but don't know really who to ask."*

– Pamela Thome Social Worker

Finding out you have to go on dialysis can be overwhelming. Once you understand your treatment needs and how they all fit into your lifestyle – your life can go back to normal.

Rogelio Garcia has been on hemodialysis since 2009.

*"Don't be scared. I mean it's something that, in the long run, is best for you, for your health and definitely will help you live a longer, healthier life."* – Rogelio, Patient

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Another way to help cope with kidney disease and dialysis is to own it.

- Take part in treatment decisions
- Arrange your own transportation
- Take your medications as prescribed
- Arrive on-time for treatments
- Follow diet and fluid restrictions 2 and
- Don't be afraid to ask for help and support.

*"We work together with our patients to help them understand what their options are not only for dialysis but for all their care throughout."* – Dr. Aaron Dall Nephrologist/Kidney Specialist

*"It just becomes a normal way of life, something to deal with."* – Rogelio, Patient