

FOR PATIENTS



Patient information

Dialysis and me

Dialysis and me –

*leading an active life while living
with your disease.*

Ideas, tips and suggestions for dialysis patients.

Your health is a key factor in your general well-being, as anyone with a chronic disease is keenly reminded on a daily basis. One such ailment is chronic kidney failure. With dialysis, it is possible to find your way back to physical health and well-being. We have created this brochure to offer you a few ideas, tips and suggestions that may help you improve your well-being.

For more information about living with renal insufficiency, please visit **www.dialyse-und-ich.de** (only in German)

The editorial team, Dialysis and me

**Would you like to receive
further informational material
about dialysis?**

Feel free to write to us by post:
**STADAPHARM GmbH, Stichwort:
Dialysis and me, Stadastraße 2-18,
61118 Bad Vilbel, Germany**

We look forward to
hearing from you!

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Nutrition and dialysis

Healthy food you can still enjoy.

Renal diseases call for certain dietary adjustments. However, when renal insufficiency is treated with dialysis, the dietary restrictions can be kept relatively modest. But since the kidneys are still not functioning fully and dialysis is not a fully fledged renal replacement, your body will experience changes that affect nutrition and your nutritional requirements.

For example, dialysis causes important minerals to be lost. Such issues can, however, be balanced out by means of a suitable diet.

The specific ways in which your disease manifests itself, and therefore what diet is ideal for you, will vary greatly from one individual to the next. With the help of your medical specialist or nutrition counselling, you can work out a diet plan fine-tuned to suit you.

In addition to ensuring that your diet is varied and enjoyable, as a dialysis patient you should make sure it takes into account certain fundamentals. With these general guidelines in mind, we will show you how you can eat healthily.

High-protein

As a dialysis patient, you have an increased protein and energy requirement. Since there is some protein loss during dialysis, you may in the long term experience a decrease in muscle mass and a reduction in physical fitness and the body's defences.



A protein-rich diet consisting of fish, meat, cereal and milk products is an important and tasty way of compensating for this deficiency. Generally speaking, all kinds of fresh meat and fish are suitable. However, you should avoid processed meat products such as preserved meat, meat loaf or smoked fish as these are high in phosphate and, often, salt.

Low-phosphate foods

During dialysis, not enough phosphate is removed from the blood, and this can cause vascular calcification.



Phosphate-rich products such as milk, yoghurt and certain types of cheese such as Emmental, Cheddar, processed cheese or sheep's milk cheese should be avoided as much as possible. There are however many delicious fat-rich alternatives such as Camembert, cream cheese or cottage cheese. Ask your medical specialist or the team in your dialysis centre about the use of phosphate binders and the appropriate quantities.

Low-potassium foods

When your kidneys are not eliminating enough potassium, this is known as hyperkalaemia. The excessive potassium content in the blood may, for example, cause a feeling of numbness in the muscles or even cardiac arrhythmia.



A low-potassium diet is therefore important. Potatoes are high in potassium and should be avoided as much as possible. However, cutting them up before cooking allows some of their potassium to be removed. Pasta and rice are an even better way of reducing the potassium in your diet.

Low-salt and low-sodium

Use only small quantities of table salt for cooking and flavouring. This will help you avoid water retention in the long term and counter high blood pressure.



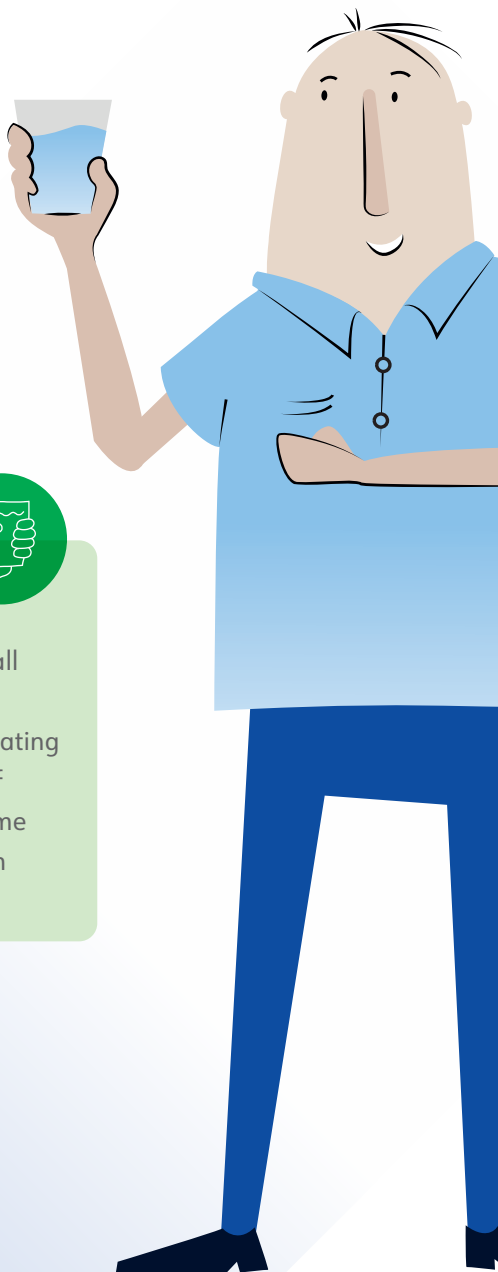
Instead of salt, flavour your food with alternatives such as spices or fresh herbs.

Reducing your fluid intake

In cases of kidney failure, the body does not eliminate enough water. The more water it contains, the more must be removed during dialysis. This can also create an additional strain for the circulation.

If the body is taking in too much water, this may cause water retention between dialysis sessions, which in turn can lead to oedemas.

Your medical specialist will determine the amount of fluid that you should keep to. Drink slowly and from small glasses. Avoid foods that will make you thirstier, such as salty or spicy dishes. Sweating heavily as a result of overexerting yourself will also make you thirsty. An ice cube, some chewing gum or a slice of lemon can often help with sensations of thirst.



Recipe suggestion

Fancy a treat?

Here, we show you one of many delicious recipes that are all highly suitable for dialysis patients.



Zurich-style

pork strips

INGREDIENTS

400 g pork fillets
2 shallots
A little flour
20 g butter
100 ml stock
100 ml cream
Lemon juice
A pinch of salt
and pepper
Pasta or rice

PORTIONS

Serves four

PREPARATION

- Cut the pork fillets into strips and sprinkle with a thin layer of flour
- Finely dice the shallots
- Heat half the butter in a pan, brown the meat and season with pepper
- Lightly braise the shallots with the rest of the butter, pour the stock in and allow to simmer
- Add the cream, then let simmer again
- Add lemon juice (optional)
- Return the meat to the pan and allow to simmer briefly
- Serve with pasta or rice

Enjoy!

You can also add mushrooms and sear them with the shallots. If doing this, we recommend well-drained canned mushrooms.

We're planning to put together a collection of recipes designed to help you conjure up a wide range of delicious meals. But we can only do this with your help: please post your favourite recipe – an appetiser, a main course or a dessert – to the address on page 3.



Independence

and quality of life

Living with renal disease – not in spite of it.

There's no question that renal disease and dialysis influence your day-to-day life. Because of this, there are many questions associated with dialysis: how can I retain as much independence as possible? How can I maintain my quality of life or even improve it? Can I actually go off on holiday? How can I manage all of this with my job? You are not the only one asking these questions. Please talk to your nephrologist about the various dialysis methods and the possibility of a kidney transplant.

We've put together a few tips to help you live as independently as possible with the limitations that dialysis brings with it.

Holiday tips

Plan your trip – for less stress and more enjoyment.

For many, a holiday trip is a welcome break. This is not something you have to give up as a dialysis patient. Provided you consult with your medical specialist and plan ahead as required, there's no reason why you shouldn't be able to have a great holiday.

The key criterion is that dialysis must be available at your holiday destination. You can use **www.dialyseauskunft.de** (only in German) to check where the nearest dialysis centre is located, both inside and outside Germany.

Appointments with the respective dialysis centre should be arranged before the start of the trip. It is important to pass on the basic information about your treatment to the centre at your holiday destination. You should also make sure your dialysis team and/or your medical specialist are aware of your trip in good time.

If not all the medications required for your dialysis are available at your holiday destination, you will need to get hold of these before setting off. You should therefore talk to your local dialysis centre about the best way to transport such medications, e.g. in a cooler.

Holidays as a dialysis patient – where to go?

Provided your holiday destination has the infrastructure for dialysis, there are generally few restrictions. Very warm destinations are not advisable, since high temperatures place the body under strain and this in turn can make you thirstier. If you are on the waiting list for a kidney transplant, we recommend a destination with good travel connections. Depending on your state of health, it may be appropriate to take out travel cancellation insurance.

Some holiday providers offer trips specially tailored to suit dialysis patients. Some cruise ships even have their own dialysis units. To learn more, please call your travel agency.

Do you have any good travel tips for dialysis patients?
If so, write to us!



Mobility

Fewer doctor's visits, more independence.

For some kidney patients, independence is simply part and parcel of their quality of life. If you're one of them, it's good to know that there are already some treatments you can manage for yourself – meaning, for instance, that you can travel more independently. For example, this is possible with methods like anaemia treatment. Let's run through the basics here: renal disease causes anaemia, and one way of treating this is the use of genetically engineered erythropoietin. Here, you already have the option of self-administering a suitable medication subcutaneously, i.e. injecting it under your skin. This frees you from the need for a medical visit each time, thereby restoring more of your independence.

If you travel and take your own medications with you, you should pay attention to the manufacturer's instructions when transporting and storing them. It is often essential to avoid interrupting the cold chain during transportation. Such medications should therefore be transported in a suitable cool bag and stored in a refrigerator directly upon arrival.

You should talk to your medical specialist about what mobility-related issues to watch out for and, should you be likely to travel, how you can organise this to ensure maximum independence.

Driving

Driving with dialysis.

For many people, driving is not just an activity they enjoy; they may also depend on it because of their local infrastructure. Please note, however, that health-related limitations may also impair your ability to drive. For example, those suffering from a severe renal insufficiency that substantially limits them physically are not allowed to drive motor vehicles.

Dialysis changes the situation. If you are a dialysis patient, your medical specialist should regularly check whether you are still in a fit condition to drive on the roads.

Be honest with yourself. Some people simply don't feel up to driving after dialysis, in which case partners, friends, relatives or others can step in and do the driving. There are also private driving services in addition to the various forms of public transport.

However, provided you consult with your medical specialist, undergo the appropriate tests regularly and maintain a healthy level of self-assessment, you should be able to continue travelling by road – either as a driver or as a passenger.



Work

Can you keep working? Yes! But only under suitable conditions.

We hope you enjoy your work. We hope that for you, it's more than just a way of paying the bills, and that you also enjoy its other positive aspects, such as opportunities to meet new people or to boost your self-esteem or general well-being.

Under certain conditions, people with severe renal disease requiring dialysis can also work. On the other hand, in some cases their general state of health will simply rule out any professional activity. But if, after consultation with your medical specialist, you do find yourself in a position to be able to go to work, you should avoid the following factors:



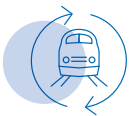
shift work, night work



physically demanding activities



activities involving a high level of stress



workplaces involving a lengthy commute



working conditions involving high levels of heat or cold, temperature fluctuations, high levels of dust etc.

It is also important to set yourself a few rules to enable you to integrate your dialysis treatment properly into your daily work routine. Part-time work is often helpful in this respect. Activities involving business travel and official trips are basically possible, provided the destination offers suitable opportunities for dialysis and the trip is planned to accommodate this. You can also find helpful tips for ensuring dialysis care during (business) travel in the "Holiday tips" and "Mobility" sections.

Depending on your state of health, you may have intermittent but lengthy periods of being unfit for work. A number of services are available to help with this – reintegration programmes, for example. Helpful information on this topic, and on issues such as continued payment of wages or sickness benefit, can be found on the website of the association for dialysis patients in Germany: **www.bundesverband-niere.de**.

Sexual activity

Open communication leads to greater intimacy.

Let's start with the good news: being a dialysis patient need not prevent you from enjoying your sex life. Renal disease can, however, trigger hormonal, physical and emotional changes that can lead to a reduction in your interest in sex.

Likewise, the side effects of some medications can have the same effect. Dialysis leaves some people feeling weary and exhausted. Quite often at such times, sexual activity is not high on their list of priorities.

You should discuss this openly with your partner. There are many aspects of love and partnership, and sexual behaviour is in any case a highly individual matter, irrespective of the dialysis element. Together, you can find a way forward that feels right for you.



Fitness and exercise

Exercise revives your spirits.

Sporting activity is also helpful for dialysis patients because it is a good way to cushion a few of the accompanying symptoms brought on by renal disease and dialysis. Positive effects of exercise and sport can include:



increased muscular strength



a greater sense of coordination



greater agility and stamina



greater physical fitness

Exercise is important for your cardiovascular system, blood vessels and bones. Taking part in sports can often leave us simply feeling more comfortable in our own skin. And vitality frequently equates to feelings of calmness and balance. Exercise is enjoyable and is good for your mood, especially if you've found the sport that suits you.



Exercise tips

for dialysis patients

Let your medical specialist advise you which type of sport and exercise, and how much of it, is right for you..

Ease your way in. Your confidence and self-assurance will continue to grow.

If you appreciate company, use group offers for sports activities.

Sports that cause you to perspire heavily will lead to increased feelings of thirst. You should discuss your individual situation with your medical specialist.

Should you lack motivation, (group) sports offers with set times at regular intervals will help.

Protect your shunt when engaging in sports – with a sleeve, for example.

Ideas for sports and training as a dialysis patient.

The following are examples of types of sport or exercise that are especially good for dialysis patients:

Cycling

Cross-country skiing

Gymnastics

Water gymnastics

Walking

Other activities such as jogging may also be suitable, depending on your physical condition. Yoga is also worthwhile for the body and mind.

Overall, it is important that you enjoy the exercise, that your medical specialist agrees to your chosen sport and that following your sporting activity, you feel better than you did before it and are not exhausted or drained.



Smoking and alcohol

You should refrain from these “luxuries”.

Many people are well aware of the general health effects and addiction risks associated with tobacco and alcohol. For those undergoing dialysis, the following applies.

While it is possible for a dialysis patient to drink alcohol, particular attention must be paid to two factors:

Potential interactions between your medications and the alcohol

The limited amount of fluid you may consume daily

Smoking, on the other hand, is off limits to dialysis patients because they are at high risk of vascular calcification. Such calcification is one of the classic effects of smoking, with consequences ranging from infarcts to strokes. If you are reliant on dialysis, you should refrain from smoking for the sake of your health.



Managing dialysis

For every low, there's a high.

Initially, it comes as a shock to be diagnosed with chronic renal insufficiency or renal failure. Depending on what stage your disease is at, you are confronted with having to get used to dialysis. In most cases, the dialysis can take place on an outpatient basis – in other words, for the most part you will be able to remain in your familiar surroundings and will only simply need to attend treatment sessions. All the same, you may experience some anxiety as you contemplate some of the changes you now face.

Both the disease and the dialysis itself present those affected with physical and psychological challenges. Depression, frustration and anxiety about the future are among the negative emotions they frequently experience. On some days, the strain is greater than on others and they have difficulty seeing the positive aspects of dialysis – especially when potential complications arise, such as a shunt occlusion.

However, everyone affected realises that dialysis repeatedly saves their life and helps them live actively and independently. The emotional rollercoaster often ends in positive feelings and gratitude. One thing many people find helpful is talking to others who are affected – because they understand from their own experience what you're going through. They will often be in a position to help you with your condition through advice or as a source of inspiration.

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A service for you from STADAPHARM

Medical advice:

Dr. med. Götz Ehlerding
Internal medicine specialist and nephrologist,
Hanover

For further information and tips about living with renal insufficiency,
please visit www.dialyse-und-ich.de (only in German)

STADAPHARM GmbH
Stadastraße 2-18
61118 Bad Vilbel

Caring for People's Health www.stadapharm.de


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