



DIET ON HOME HEMODIALYSIS

Dialysis and kidney failure can affect your nutrition. Depending on the type of dialysis you choose to do at home, your diet may need to be modified. In general, the more hours you dialyze (Nocturnal, Short Daily) the more liberal your diet will become. The dietitian will help you make the appropriate choices that are tailored to your needs and preferences.

Protein is important to build and maintain muscle, repair tissue and fight infection. It will be necessary to include adequate protein from meat, poultry, fish, legumes and eggs as recommended by your dietitian. The need for protein will vary with the frequency or length of your dialysis treatment, adequate protein is always needed.

Phosphorus (phosphate) is not easily removed with conventional dialysis and can build up causing bone and heart problems, and even itchy skin. You may need to restrict or limit yourself from eating foods that are high in phosphorus. For those who are doing Nocturnal/Short Daily dialysis you may be able to increase your intake of phosphorus containing foods.

Salt can cause you to retain fluid, leading to high blood pressure, swelling and even breathing difficulties. It is extremely important to follow a low salt diet. Avoid adding salt when you're cooking and at the table. It is also important to avoid most fast foods, or packaged and processed foods because they contain huge amounts of salt (also known as sodium) so be sure to read package labels.

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Potassium is needed to keep the nerves and muscles working. It is important to talk with your renal dietitian and follow dietary suggestions regarding potassium intake. Following your potassium diet as well as your dialysis prescription will help control your blood potassium levels. This is particularly important for those who are doing conventional dialysis. Those who are doing nocturnal or short daily dialysis may be able to consume more potassium-rich foods.

Fluid Your amount of fluid intake may need to be restricted depending on how often and how long you dialyze and if you have any urine output.

Fluid includes anything that pours and as well as anything that becomes liquid at room temperature such as water, soup, tea, juice, milk, ice cream, popsicles, alcoholic beverages, and gelatin. These foods have to be counted in your daily intake. You may have to limit your fluid intake depending on your weight, blood pressure, and symptoms. More frequent dialysis (Nocturnal/Short daily) will likely allow you to consume more fluids.

Your renal team can provide guidance and will be a source of support while determining your personal dietary needs.

Need this information in an accessible format?

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About the Chronic Kidney Disease Vascular Access Fact Sheets:

This Fact Sheet was created by the Ontario Renal Network ("ORN"), a work unit within Cancer Care Ontario ("CCO"), in collaboration with the Provincial Vascular Access Working Group ("PVAWG") to provide patients with standardized educational material about Catheters. This Fact Sheet is to be used for informational purposes only. This Fact Sheet is not a substitute for medical advice. This Fact Sheet may not include all relevant information and is not an exhaustive resource. Always consult with your healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns. The information in this Fact Sheet does not create a physician-patient relationship between CCO/ORN/PVAWG and you.