

Dialysis

Dialysis is a treatment used when your body's kidneys stop working well. Extra fluids and wastes are removed from your body with dialysis. There are 2 types of dialysis:

- Hemodialysis
- Peritoneal dialysis

Hemodialysis

With hemodialysis, small amounts of blood are pumped out of the body and through a machine called an artificial kidney. This machine filters extra fluid and wastes from the blood. The blood is then pumped back into your body. Treatments take about 4 hours and are done 3 times each week. Treatment can be given at a dialysis center or at home. Talk with your doctor and health care team about your options.

For this treatment, there needs to be a site where the blood is taken out of the body and then returned to the blood stream. This is called an **access**. After the access is made and healed, 2 needles are inserted into the access. One needle draws the blood out and the other needle returns the blood to the body.

Access Sites

There are three main types of access sites.

- **AV Fistula** – With minor surgery, an artery is joined to a vein under the skin. This is most often done in an arm.
- **Graft** – With minor surgery, a soft plastic tube is used to join the artery and vein under the skin.
- **A central catheter** – For temporary dialysis, the doctor can put in a catheter in a large vein, most often in the neck.

Peritoneal Dialysis

With peritoneal dialysis, a catheter is put into the abdomen.

Special fluid, called **dialysate**, is put into the abdomen through the catheter. The fluid stays in the abdomen for several hours. During this time, the body's extra fluid and wastes move from the blood to the fluid. This fluid is much like urine, and it is then drained from the body through the catheter. Clean fluid is then put into the abdomen, and the steps are repeated.

There are 2 main types:

- **Continuous Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis (CAPD)** is done 4 to 5 times each day and the fluid stays in the abdomen for 3 to 4 hours. This can be done anywhere there is a clean, private area.
- **Continuous Cycling Peritoneal Dialysis (CCPD)** is done using a special machine. The fluid stays in the abdomen for a shorter time, about 1½ hours. The machine is set up and the person is connected to this machine for 8 to 10 hours during the night. The person is unhooked from the machine during the day.

Talk to the staff if you have any questions or concerns.