



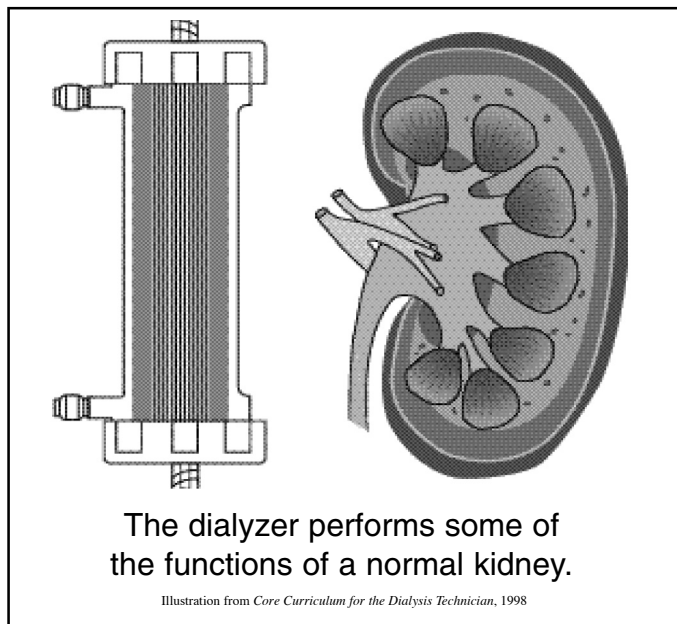
## KEYS TO A LONG LIFE

# Keys to a Long Life

### What is adequate dialysis?

Healthy kidneys work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When kidneys stop working, dialysis does *some* of this work. **Adequate dialysis** means enough treatment to help you live long and well.

Dialysis is measured in a dose, like a dose of medicine. Your doctor will prescribe a dose of dialysis that should keep you feeling well. Your URR or Kt/V score will tell you if you are getting enough treatment.



### What is Urea Reduction Ratio (URR)?

Dialysis removes many wastes. One waste product called *urea* (yoo-ree'-ah), or *blood urea nitrogen* (BUN) is easy to measure. BUN can be tested before and after dialysis to see how much waste has been removed. The test to compare BUN levels before and after dialysis is called a URR. Your URR

should be 65% or higher to be sure you are getting enough dialysis. Your doctor should prescribe a URR of 70% or higher to be sure your URR is at least 65%. Ask about your URR level.

### What is Kt/V?

Kt/V (kay-tee-over-vee) is another way to measure the dose of dialysis. Kt/V measures clearance, or "K," (urea and other waste removal) of the dialyzer. Time, how long each treatment lasts, is the "t." "V" is the volume of fluid in your body.

Your Kt/V should be 1.2 or higher to be sure you are getting enough dialysis. Your doctor should prescribe a Kt/V of at least 1.3 to be sure that your Kt/V is at least 1.2. Ask about your Kt/V level.

### Why is getting enough hemodialysis important to me?

If you do not get enough dialysis, you will feel ill. Your skin may turn yellow. You may have itching. Your feet may swell up with fluid. You may not want to eat. It may be hard to sleep. You may feel short of breath, or very tired.

You may also feel depressed, or your thinking may be slower. Over time, if you do not get enough dialysis, you increase your risk of death.

Getting enough dialysis will help you live long and live well. *You can get too little dialysis, but never too much.*

March 2005

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## How can I be sure to get enough dialysis?

Problem	How can I prevent it?	What should I ask?
My URR or Kt/V is less than the goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always go to all of your dialysis treatments.</li> <li>• Be on time so you can fit in your whole treatment.</li> <li>• Always stay for the whole treatment time. (Missing just 5 minutes of each treatment for a year is the same as skipping three treatments!)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long a treatment did my doctor prescribe?</li> <li>• Can something be done to treat my dialysis symptoms (cramping, low blood pressure, nausea, etc.) so I can stay for my whole treatment?</li> <li>• Can I bring things from home such as blankets, craft work, magazines, etc. so I can be more comfortable and stay for my whole treatment?</li> </ul>
I don't think I'm getting enough dialysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell the nurse or doctor if you feel sick, tired, have trouble sleeping or eating, or have other symptoms of not enough dialysis.</li> <li>• Know your treatment time, kidney size, and blood flow rate. Check to be sure they are right at each treatment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could my symptom be caused by not enough dialysis?</li> <li>• What is my prescribed URR or Kt/V?</li> <li>• What URR or Kt/V am I currently receiving?</li> </ul>

## Where can I get more information about adequate dialysis?

- Visit Kidney School™ Module 10: *Getting Adequate Dialysis* at [www.kidneyschool.org](http://www.kidneyschool.org).
- *AAKP Advisory on Hemodialysis*. To request a copy, call the American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP) at (800) 749-2257, e-mail AAKP at [info@aakp.org](mailto:info@aakp.org) or visit their website at [www.aakp.org](http://www.aakp.org).
- *What you Should Know about Dialyzer Reuse: A Guide for Hemodialysis*. To request a free copy, call the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) at (800) 622-9010 or visit their website at [www.kidney.org](http://www.kidney.org).



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