





## Dialyzing Sessions

Typically dialysis is done 3 times per week for 3-4 hour sessions. The catheter will be attached to the dialysis machine in order to carry your blood to the machine, cleanse it, and then return the cleansed blood back into your body. The dialysis machine cleanses your blood with dialysate which is fluid that removes unwanted waste products from your blood.

The alarms on the machine may sound during your dialyzing session. The machine monitors pressures created inside the tubing and dialyzer as well as blood flow, temperature, dialysate mixture, blood pressure and if any of these go below or above specified ranges then the alarm will sound to notify the staff.

### ! Important!

Be careful not to damage your catheter. Keep the clamps closed and the caps on at all times.

Do not use scissors to remove your old dressing and make sure it is always securely fastened to your skin. Call your HCP immediately if your catheter does get damaged.

## Hemodialysis Overview

Normal functioning kidneys filter excess water and waste from our blood which keeps the composition of the blood stable. If your kidneys are damaged, dysfunctional or missing, these harmful wastes build up. A dialysis machine, which functions in place of a kidney, can be used to cleanse these wastes from your blood. The dialysis catheter is inserted into a vein and exchanges blood to and from the dialysis machine.

A dialysis catheter is a hollow, soft tube that has two openings—one to send your blood to the dialysis machine and the other to return the cleansed blood back to your body. Each opening has a clamp and a cap. The clamp is kept closed and the cap is kept on whenever the catheter is not being used.

## Care and Maintenance

Your health care provider will give you specific instructions on how to care for your catheter, but you should follow these general guidelines:

- Do NOT swim or shower.
- Do NOT soak your dressing while bathing.
- If your dressing becomes wet or loose, change it. If you cannot change it or you need assistance, notify your doctor immediately.
- To clean the skin around your exit site, use either 70% isopropyl alcohol-based solution or aqueous-based povidone iodine solution. Be sure to let the area dry before you apply your dressing.
- Do NOT use acetone on any part of the catheter tubing. Exposure to this agent may cause catheter damage.

- If provided with a dialysis travel card, carry it with you at all times. Check your catheter and exit site every day. Your exit site should heal in approximately one week. You should call your doctor if you have any questions or concerns about your dialysis catheter, especially if:
  - » You notice any oozing or drainage from the exit site.
  - » You notice any redness, swelling, irritation or soreness at the exit site or along the tunnel.
  - » You notice a leak in your catheter (check that your clamps are closed and your caps are on tightly).