

ARE YOU SHORTENING YOUR DIALYSIS TIME?

The hemodialysis treatments you are receiving replace only a small part (less than 15 percent) of the normal function of your kidneys. This 15 percent is far below the 100 percent of your normal kidney function.

If you don't receive enough of the dialysis treatment your blood will retain too much of the body's waste products that cause uremia and you will always feel sick. If you are being *underdialyzed* you can expect to experience many of the following symptoms:

- Weakness and tiredness all the time
- Loss of real weight
- Poor appetite
- Nausea
- Taste of ammonia in your mouth
- Yellow skin color
- Uremic pericarditis (inflammation of the heart)

You will also be at higher risk for infection and prolonged bleeding.

On the other hand, most patients who are *well dialyzed* will experience the following:

- A sense of feeling good
- Good appetite with normal weight
- Feeling like dialysis is not necessary when the treatment day arrives
- Yellow skin color is fading or faded away

You should recognize that your own health and your very life depend on you receiving the right "dose" of treatment. This dose includes having a large enough dialyzer, a high enough blood flow, a well functioning vascular access, and enough time on dialysis. Remember that there may be other factors that can affect or interfere in your specific situation, which may prevent you from receiving the "right dose" of treatment but don't let that be because *you* are shortening your dialysis time.

It's easy to decide, "coming off" early a few minutes won't matter, "it won't hurt me". Chances are this shortened treatment request is not a one-time event. It happens once a week, several times a month or it happens daily. Shortened dialysis time does eventually harm your body by causing the symptoms of being underdialyzed. Being underdialyzed puts additional stress on an already weakened body, which can lead to a shorter life expectancy.

This is why dialysis staff encourages you to remain on dialysis your entire prescribed time, or reminds you to arrive on time if your chronically late, or your doctor increases your time. It's not for the benefit of your health care providers; it's for your well being.

A well-dialyzed patient should be able to look forward to doing many of the things that were planned before renal disease occurred.

TIME LOST DUE TO SHORTENED TREATMENT

HEMODIALYSIS PATIENTS DIALYZING THREE (3) TIMES PER WEEK				
MINUTES LOST PER				HOURS LOST PER YEAR
TREATMENT	WEEK	MONTH	YEAR	
1 Minutes	3 Minutes	13 Minutes	156 Minutes	2.6 Hours
3 Minutes	9 Minutes	39 Minutes	468 Minutes	7.8 Hours
5 Minutes	15 Minutes	65 Minutes	780 Minutes	13 Hours
10 Minutes	30 Minutes	130 Minutes	1,560 Minutes	26 Hours
15 Minutes	45 Minutes	195 Minutes	2,340 Minutes	39 Hours
20 Minutes	60 Minutes	260 Minutes	3,120 Minutes	52 Hours
25 Minutes	75 Minutes	325 Minutes	3,900 Minutes	65 Hours
30 Minutes	90 Minutes	390 Minutes	4,680 Minutes	78 Hours

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