

Kidney Health Information

Consequences of Kidney Failure

What is renal (kidney) failure?

Renal failure occurs when the kidneys fail to function properly. Under normal circumstances, the kidneys work continuously to keep you alive and healthy. They act as filters to remove waste products from the blood and excess water from the body.

Being diagnosed with renal failure is a traumatic experience for most patients. Quite apart from feeling unwell, you will probably be experiencing a flood of worries: will you be able to get the right sort of care? Will the various treatments cost anything? How will you know what to do? Will you have to stop working? Will home life be the same? etc. The best advice you can start with is try to stay positive! Recent advances mean that most people with kidney failure can be treated effectively. A visit to the dialysis centre will help to reduce your fears; their highly specialised teams offer the most up-to-date treatments in a pleasant environment. You will feel much better when you meet the staff who will

look after you, learn about the treatments that they have to offer and meet patients who are living active lives on dialysis. You will be in good hands.

How quickly does renal failure develop and what is the treatment?

There is no short answer here. For some patients, renal failure can develop over the course of months, even years – for others it can occur very quickly.

However it develops, you will need some form of treatment for the rest of your life. Thanks to a variety of options being available treatment received can usually be tailored to suit your lifestyle.

What is the Renal Care Programme?

The Renal Care Programme has teams of specialist staff to help with all forms of treatment for kidney disease, including dialysis and transplantation. Led by a renal physician, the teams consist of doctors, surgeons, renal nurses, laboratory scientists, transplant co-ordinators, dieticians, social workers, counsellors, renal technicians and others as required.

They are dedicated to providing treatment, advice, training and support, be it physical, psychological or financial – even arranging transport requirements to and from treatments. Their objective is to

give you and your family the most up-to-date skills, care and comfort available so you can return to as independent a lifestyle as possible.

Generally, renal care programmes can be divided into three areas:

Nephrology

Dialysis

Renal transplantation

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Kidney Research UK, Kings Chambers, Priestgate, Peterborough PE1 1FG

Kidney Health Information telephone number: 0845 300 1499

Or text keyword KIDNEY with message to 0778 620 0505

Or email: kidneyhealth@kidneyresearchuk.org

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