

Outpatient Hemodialysis

This handout will explain what to expect on your first day at the clinic. Arrive 30 minutes in early because you will need to sign consent forms and other papers.

Future visits you need to arrive at least 15 minutes before your “start time” to allow time for staff to get you on the machine.

On your first day, make sure you have:

- Insurance cards: Medicare, HMO, medical assistance, and private insurance
- Social security card

The staff will explain the machines and all that you need to know in the first 2 weeks. Bring family or friends with you for support and to help you talk through all you will learn.

What to Bring

Bring a blanket if you want. Many patients feel a little chilly during their dialysis treatments. The blanket should be washable. Some clinics provide blankets.

Clothing

Wear clothing that allows your catheter, fistula, or graft to be seen at all times during the treatment. All the clothing you wear should be washable. If your access is in your arm, wear short sleeves or roll-up sleeves. If your access is in your neck or chest, wear a button-down or a V-neck shirt.

Food

Most clinics will not allow eating and drinking during treatments. Some clinics will provide ice chips and water. Please eat more than one hour before coming to dialysis or eat after you leave. You may

have a drop in blood pressure or nausea if you eat during the treatment.

Driving

Have someone drive you the first 1-2 weeks. Your body needs time to adjust to the treatments. You may feel a little unsteady the first few times you have dialysis. Many people find it useful to sign up with a driving service or volunteer program to get to treatments. Your social worker can help you with this.

If you need help getting in and out of a car, bring someone to help you. The staff cannot leave the clinic to help you in the parking lot. They will help you while you are in the clinic.

Social Worker

A social worker will be present to help you. They will help you and your family with many issues (i.e. rides, getting enrolled in Medicare, coping with chronic dialysis, home care needs, finding community resources). If you have questions, you can ask to talk to the social worker when you first start.

Who to Call

Hemodialysis
600 Highland Avenue - C53
Madison, WI 53792-5745
608-263-8748
608-262-4893 (fax)

My Dialysis Clinic

If you have questions about your new outpatient dialysis, call your dialysis clinic.

Name of Dialysis Clinic:

Address:

Phone Number:

My Dialysis Schedule

Days (circle): Mon Tues Wed Thurs Fri Sat

Treatment time: _____

The **first** day: Arrive at _____ and
leave at _____.

After the first day: Arrive at _____
and leave at _____.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 9/2020. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#6435.