

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowałiby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。

Designed & Produced by the Department of Clinical Illustration,
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Understanding Kidney Failure A Guide for Patients and Carers

Renal Unit

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- *Wash your hands with soap and warm water and dry thoroughly. Use hand gel, if provided, in care facilities.*
- *If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and vomiting stay at home and do not visit relatives that are vulnerable in hospital or in residential care. You will spread the illness.*
- *Keep the environment clean and safe. Let's work together to keep it that way. Prevention is better than cure.*

Introduction

This leaflet has been produced to help patients and carers understand kidney failure and how it can affect people who have been diagnosed with this condition.

What is Kidney Failure?

Chronic kidney failure (also known as renal failure) is a long-term medical condition having many possible causes. Over a period of time, sometimes years, the kidneys become less able to do the job they are supposed to and may stop working altogether. Once the kidneys have stopped working sufficiently, it is known as end stage kidney failure.

What do the Kidneys do?

Most people have two kidneys however some people may only have one. If you only have one kidney and it is in good condition it will do the job well enough for you to remain healthy. The main functions of the kidneys are to:

- Clean the blood / remove waste products
- Maintain your body's fluid balance
- Help control blood pressure
- Help to control the manufacture of red blood cells
- Keep minerals in balance (sodium, calcium, potassium and phosphorus)

What are the symptoms?

There are often no symptoms of chronic kidney failure in the early stages of the disease however, later on the condition may cause any or all of the following:

- Shortness of breath
- Swelling of the ankles
- Loss of appetite, bad taste in the mouth
- Nausea, vomiting and weight loss
- Itching
- Weakness or tiredness
- Low sex drive

How do I know I have Kidney Failure?

There are many different causes of kidney failure with high blood pressure and diabetes being two of the main causes. One reliable way of diagnosing kidney failure is by a series of blood tests, urine tests, ultra-sound scans and a biopsy (a sample of tissue from the kidney)

Blood tests to determine the levels of toxins in the blood are taken regularly to provide us with a picture of what is happening and an idea of whether you will need to commence additional medication to help with the symptoms you may be experiencing.

Potassium and creatinine are two of the many waste products that build up in the blood and are measured by a simple blood test. If these waste products are elevated in the blood it is an indication that your kidneys are failing. You may also develop anaemia associated with your kidney failure, which is also treated with medication.

How can end stage Kidney Failure be treated?

The main treatment is dialysis of which there are two types, haemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis. Transplantation is another option if you are suitable. There is no cure for kidney failure however with the right treatment for you, health can be improved and life prolonged.

Will I need regular check ups?

You will need to attend the hospital to have regular check ups. It is very important that you attend your appointments where we can discuss your treatment and you will have the opportunity to discuss concerns you may have. We can keep a close watch on you and help with symptoms you may be experiencing.

What help and support is available to me?

There is always someone available for you and your family to speak to, and answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to ask for help and advice and we will do our best to support and help you. You may also wish to get in touch with the New Cross Hospital Kidney Patients Association, who offer support to local kidney patients and their families contactable through the renal unit. There is also a psychologist available to talk to if you feel this is appropriate.

If you have any concerns or questions please contact the Chronic Renal Failure Team

Useful Telephone Numbers

Chronic Kidney Disease Team: 01902 695466 or Bleep: 1741
01902 695469

Haemodialysis Unit: 01902 695010

Peritoneal Dialysis Unit: 01902 695011

Other information sources

www.kidneypatientguide.org.uk
www.renalpatients.co.uk
www.kidney.org
www.kidneyresearchuk.org

Stein A., Wild. (2002) Kidney Dialysis and Transplants.

Stephenson K., Villane R. (1993) Results of a Pre-dialysis Education Programme. Dialysis and Transplantation.