



Helping Kidney Dialysis Help You

Information prepared for

When Your Kidneys Fail...

Failing kidneys can no longer remove harmful wastes and excess fluids from your blood. This is called End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). When you have ESRD, you must get treatment to replace the workload of your failed kidneys. This is why you and your doctor have decided that hemodialysis is the best treatment for you.

When You Are On Dialysis...

Hemodialysis works by filtering your blood. It removes harmful wastes that your body does not need. But, hemodialysis can also remove good things from your blood that your body does need. One of these good things is carnitine.

When Your Body Loses Carnitine...

Carnitine is a natural substance in your body that helps in energy production. A loss of carnitine may cause an "energy shortage". This is known as dialysis-related carnitine deficiency, or DCD for short.

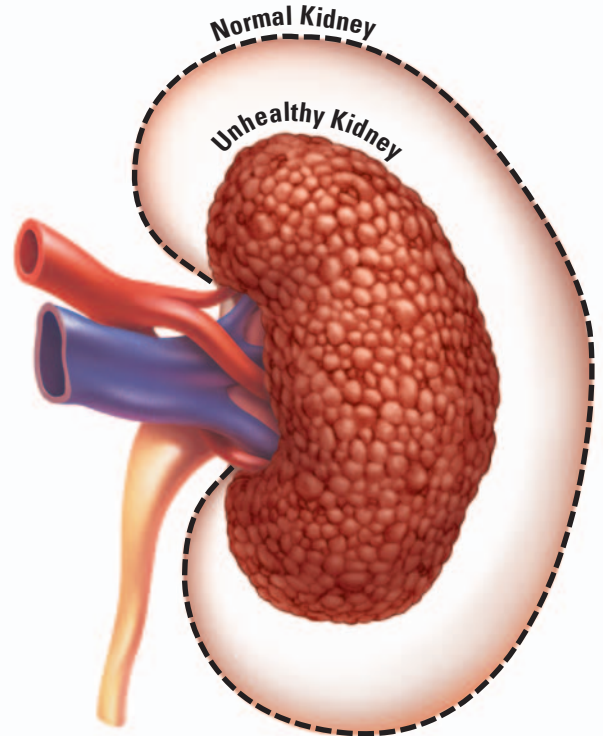
When you have DCD, your skeletal muscles don't get the energy they need. As a result, your muscles may tire more quickly and you may feel weak. DCD can also have an effect on the pumping action of your heart. This change can lead to low blood pressure.

If you experience any of the following symptoms, you may have DCD:

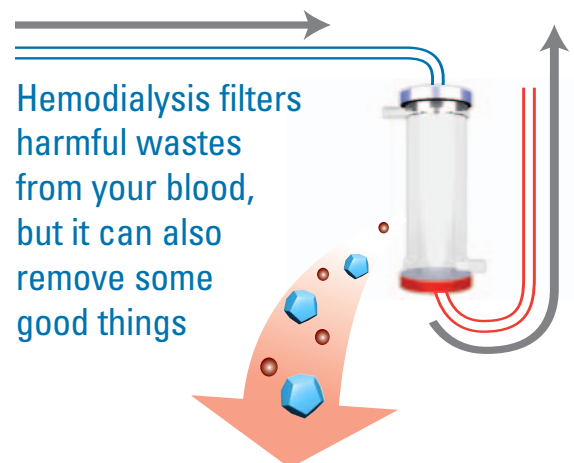
- Weak pumping action of the heart
- Low blood pressure during your treatment session
- Skeletal muscle weakness

Talk with your doctor. If you have DCD, there is a medication that can help restore your carnitine levels.

Kidney Failure



A failing kidney cannot filter the blood, and harmful substances accumulate in the body



Hemodialysis filters harmful wastes from your blood, but it can also remove some good things



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...Time To Take Action

To get the most from your treatment you can consider following these steps.

Eat Healthy

Choose quality over quantity! High-quality protein foods, such as meat, fish, poultry, and eggs produce less waste than others.

Think about how much you drink! When your kidneys aren't working, water builds up quickly in your body. Ask your dietician about your daily fluid intake.

Hold the salt! Salty foods make you thirsty and make your body hold excess water.

Mind your minerals! Too much phosphorus found in milk, nuts and dried beans can weaken your bones. Too much potassium found in salt substitutes, chocolate, and some fruits and vegetables can affect your heart.

Stay Active

Look for creative ways to keep your mind and body active.

Exercise your options! Become more active in your daily life. Try a short walk around the block or mall.

Keep your head in the game! Use the "down time" after your treatments to try something new. Read a book, listen to relaxing music, or do a crossword puzzle.



Once you have a plan that works, stick to it!

Take your medications as prescribed, be on time for your dialysis appointments, and talk to your doctor about any changes in your health.