

# 10 Tips

## to Help You Become Active in Your Care!

### 1 **KNOW YOUR CARE PLAN.**

It's your road map to better health. Your care plan is created every year by you, your doctor and the dialysis staff. It contains medical, nutritional, and social goals specific to you. Request a copy of your care plan and save it with your medical records.

### 2 **ASK QUESTIONS.**

Find out what your medications do for you, how well dialysis is cleaning your blood, why certain foods are bad for you, and what foods are best.

### 3 **KNOW YOUR DIALYSIS OPTIONS.**

Did you know there are different ways to dialyze? Some options even allow you to dialyze at home. Some may suit your needs better than others, like helping you work or go to school. Ask and find out.

### 4 **KNOW YOURSELF.**

You know your body better than anyone else. If you don't feel well after taking some medications, tell the doctor and the staff exactly how you feel. They need your feedback to make your care plan work for you.

### 5 **NOTICE TRENDS.**

Is your blood pressure high lately? Are you cramping more? Having trouble sleeping at night? These things could indicate that your care plan should be adjusted. Tell the staff about them.

### 6 **EDUCATE YOURSELF.**

Don't be shy or afraid to ask your care team to explain medical terms in words you can understand. Ask where you can get more information about medical issues that might affect you. They are important!

### 7 **SPEAK UP.**

You are the star of your care plan meeting. Don't be shy. Be heard! The more you take part in the meeting, the more you will benefit.

### 8 **YOUR APPOINTMENT IS IMPORTANT**

This meeting is focused entirely on your health and how to improve it. Your medical team is there to help you, so if you are unable to keep your appointment, let them know in advance and reschedule as soon as possible.

### 9 **DECIDE TOGETHER.**

Make sure you understand what each part of the care plan means and how it will affect your health. You will be asked to approve the decisions the doctor and staff make, so you need to understand every part.

### 10 **YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO ALONE.**

It's okay to bring a loved one, a family member, or a good friend to help you ask questions and understand the answers. Under special circumstances, they could go in your place, but of course it's best for you to be there and actively participate.



## End Stage Renal Disease National Coordinating Center

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