

ESRD Patient News[©]

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Hello,

It's a new year. A new season. Changes as the seasons change. New challenges. New victories. Change is the only constant in our lives. The question is how do we manage that change. Do we buckle under it or do we rise above it? Do we let our stress manage us or do we manage our stress?

This edition focuses on stress management in a unique way. There is a section devoted specifically to stress management and the rest are ways to manage your stress that perhaps you hadn't considered.

These include getting outside and traveling. Did you know that it can be perfectly safe to travel while on dialysis – hemo or peritoneal? It can be. The clue is in planning.

Hopefully these articles will give you some ideas on new ways to manage your stress and improve your quality of life on dialysis.

Don't forget to [check our website](#) regularly for updates and new programs.



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ESRD Patient News[©], a publication of The Carlisle-Williams Foundation, Inc, informs our readers of issues important to management and understanding of their disease and furthers the Foundation's mission of providing hope and support to ESRD patients. We welcome and encourage feedback. "Contact Us" on the website. Thank you!

Stress Awareness

Have a more relaxed spring

Here are several tips to help recognize stressors that may be affecting your health, and ways to help you build resilience:

Recognize and counter signs of stress. Your body sends signals that say "I'm stressed out!" These can include difficulty concentrating, headaches, cold hands, tight muscles, a nervous stomach, clenched teeth, feeling on edge, fidgety, irritable or withdrawn. Knowing how your body communicates can help you deal with stressful moments. Learn to not only recognize when you are experiencing stress, but also to take action to counter their effects. For example, deep breathing, stretching, going for a walk, writing down your thoughts and taking quiet time to focus. All of these activities can help induce relaxation and reduce tension.

Take time for yourself. Make taking care of yourself a daily routine. It's not selfish or self-indulgent — and it might require saying "no" to requests or prioritizing yourself along with your responsibilities. Start with small changes in your routine to help build resilience to stressful circumstances. Work in time to exercise, eat healthy foods, participate in relaxing activities and sleep. In fact, including a regimen of exercise, which for some may include yoga or meditation, can be very important when feeling stressed. Also, take time to notice the "good minutes" in each day or to do something that you enjoy, such as reading a book or listening to music, which can be a way to shift your attention and focus on the positive rather than the negative.

Try new routines. From scheduling bath and bedtimes to blocking off time to plan and prioritize tasks, additional structure can provide a daily framework that allows you to

attune to your body's signals. Then, you can take steps to potentially manage stress earlier than you once did.

Stay connected and make new friends. Stay in touch with family, friends and groups in your life — technology makes this easier than ever. Having or being a person to talk with can be reassuring and calming. Using video features can enhance the connection in telecommunication or online communications for some people.

See problems through a different lens. Experts call changing the way we think about and respond to stress "reframing." View sitting in traffic or around the house as an opportunity to enjoy music, podcasts or pleasant views. Reduce anger in response to rude or aggressive behavior by imagining what might be happening in that person's life. Keeping situations in perspective is an important way to boost stress resilience. If you practice reframing, you will get better at it over time.

Seek help with problems. Many people experience the same day-to-day strains related to caregiving, relationships, health, work and money. Look to friends and family, as appropriate, or other trusted individuals or resources for tips and information.

Talk to a health professional if stress is affecting your well-being, you feel you cannot manage the stress you're experiencing, or stress has caused you to engage in or increase substance use. Seek appropriate care if stress is harming your relationships or ability to work. If you have suicidal thoughts, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Lifeline chat is a service available to everyone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Warm Weather is Here - It's Time to Get Outside

Being Outdoors Is Essential to Mental Health

Research shows that even 20 minutes outdoors can [lower stress](#) hormones, improve mood and help restore focus. According to [Frontiers in Psychology](#), time in natural settings can reduce anxiety and regulate the nervous system.

The constant buzz of modern life can be relentless, and the body is less tolerant of being in a state of chronic stress as we age. Spending time in nature gives a much-needed reset.

Find Joy and Gratitude in Being Present Among Nature

Whether being productive by working in our gardens or mowing the lawns, raking leaves or sweeping the yard, it calms the brain.

It is equally effective when simply sitting outside people watching, reading, enjoying the sunrise or sunset or simply being. Naps work too.

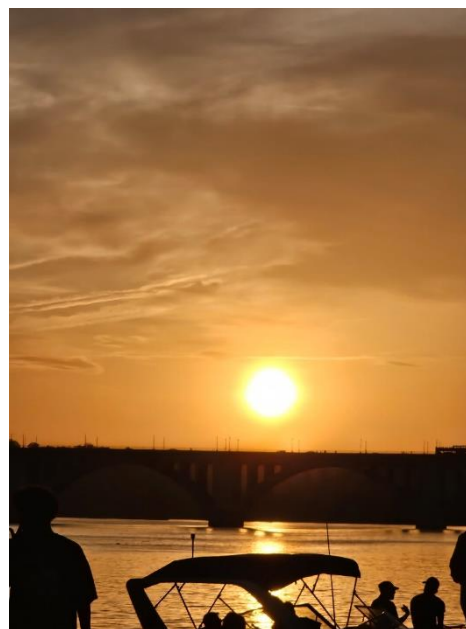
As you have the opportunity, go for a walk. Whether it's walking in a park, walking along the ocean, walking downtown or simply walking around in your yard or parking lot. The effect of walking outside is very energizing and relaxing and therapeutic all at the same time.

Slow Down and Breathe

Women, in particular, tend to downplay their need for this kind of replenishment. We're conditioned to prioritize productivity, caregiving and efficiency, often at the expense of our own nervous systems. But self-care isn't a luxury — it's a necessity.

Nature also teaches humility. Watching goslings trail after their parents; seeing the plants grow bigger each year that you planted or perhaps trees in the park that you remember being a lot smaller—all reminders that life moves on, indifferent to my worries and my deadlines. The cyclical rhythm of nature offers a profound contrast to the constant urgency of human life. Allowing yourself to tune in to that rhythm, even for a few minutes, has a grounding effect that we all need.

Getting out in nature doesn't erase problems, but it helps to slow down, breathe and reconnect with you. And **you** are important.



Traveling on Dialysis

Dialysis does not have to keep you from taking vacations or visiting families. There are options for in-center patients as well as for those who perform their dialysis at home. These next articles provide some ideas and guidelines.

Travel Rights for People on Dialysis

The Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) of 1990 says airlines can't discriminate against people with disabilities, including PD and HHD patients. The law applies to U.S. and foreign flights. These rules cover your rights when you need an "Assistive Device" like a portable dialysis machine.

Your rights include:

- Not counting your dialysis machine as a carry-on item if it fits in the overhead bin or under the seat in front of you on the plane
- Help with stowing and retrieving your machine as a carry-on item
- Stowing your machine so it is one of the first things off the plane at the end of the flight, if you checked it as luggage
- Giving your machine priority over other bags if space is limited
- Baggage liability limits don't apply if the airline loses or harms your machine—they must pay for your machine based on the purchase price
- Not being asked to sign a waiver of liability for loss or damage

When you check a dialysis machine as luggage, some may try to charge a fee if you have suitcases plus a machine. Some will charge you if your machine weighs more than 50 lbs. Under the ACAA, the airlines are not allowed to charge you for your dialysis machine.

Right to bring your dialysis machine on a plane

Before you purchase a ticket, go to the airline's website to check the carry-on bag

limitations. You can use that information to determine if your PD cyclor will fit on the plane or must go as checked luggage. The NxStage® System One used for HHD is too large to fit in any airplane cabin and can only go as checked luggage.

Plan to arrive at the airport two hours early; it takes time to talk to airline agents about travel with a dialysis machine.

Right to carry medications and syringes with you

To be safe, pack all medications in your carry-on. Airplanes don't have refrigerators, so if you have a drug that must be kept cold, ask your pharmacist how to package it for travel.

If you bring syringes, you must also bring along the drug you inject, such as insulin or EPO, with a professionally printed label that says what it is. There is no limit to how many empty syringes you can bring, as long as you also have the drug with you.

Get help at the security line

If it has been a while since you last flew, some things have changed, including what you're allowed to bring on a flight.

For a full list of what is prohibited in carry-on and checked bags, visit the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) website.

At the security line, if you need help to lift your cyclor onto the belt, ask for it. You may have an easier time if you bring the manual for your machine or a letter from your doctor to explain what it is.

If your PD catheter has the titanium adapter, or if you have an insulin pump, pacemaker, a steel plate in your body, a prosthetic limb or other hidden medical device, tell the security guard before you go through the metal detector. Most airports

will ask you to remove your shoes before going through the metal detector, so wear shoes that are easy to take off.

Right to pre-board your PD cyclor

As an assistive device, a PD cyclor has priority for stowage. Be sure to measure it first so you know it will fit in an overhead bin. If you plan to bring your cyclor onto the plane, tell the gate agent and ask for help to get your cyclor on board and stowed if you need it. When boarding starts, the agent will ask for passengers who need assistance or extra time getting down the jet way to board.

Traveling with dialysate

If you do PD or use a NxStage machine for HHD, you'll need to bring dialysate on your trip. Plan ahead so your supply company can ship most of the boxes to where you will be staying.

The airlines should also allow you to take a day or two of dialysate without a fee for extra or overweight luggage, but there will be a charge for more than that. All supplies must be in their original boxes, with the contents clearly labeled.

Better travel when you know your rights

Knowing your rights as a home dialysis patient, may make travel a smoother experience. If you do encounter any problems, you can report it to the DOT Disability Hotline at 1- 800-778-4838.

<https://davita.com/education/articles/travel-rights-for-people-on-home-dialysis/>
<https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/notice-portable-dialysis-machine>.

TSA Cares - Help line for Travelers

TSA Cares is a toll-free help line (855 787 2227) to assist travelers with disabilities and medical conditions. TSA recommends that passengers call 72 hours ahead of travel for information about what to expect during screening. Travelers may ask questions about screening policies, procedures and what to expect at the security checkpoint.

TSA Cares will serve as an additional, dedicated resource specifically for passengers with disabilities, medical conditions or other circumstances or their loved ones who want to prepare for the screening process prior to flying. Travelers may also request a Passenger Support Specialist ahead of time.

Contact TSA Cares Monday through Friday 8 a.m.-11 p.m. Eastern Time; weekends and Holidays 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Eastern Time. Travelers who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to contact TSA Cares or e-mail TSA-ContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov.

When a passenger with a disability or medical condition calls TSA Cares, a representative will provide assistance with information about screening that is relevant to the passenger's specific disability or medical condition, or the passenger may be referred to disability experts at TSA.

Current policies and procedures focus on ensuring that all passengers, regardless of personal situations and needs, are treated equally and with the dignity, respect, and courtesy they deserve. Every person and item must be screened before entering each secure boarding area. All disability-related equipment, aids, and devices are allowed through security checkpoints once cleared through screening.

<http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/travelers-disabilities-and-medical-conditions>

Go RV'ing

RV'ing is becoming more and more popular, and with the myriad of options available today, this can be a great way for dialysis patients to take a vacation. Advanced planning for a vacation is necessary when you are on dialysis so include your nurse and social worker in your advance traveling plans. Then, when the plans are set, you won't have to worry about arrangements for dialysis treatments and can enjoy all the benefits of getting away on vacation.

Camping and road trips on dialysis

According to the U.S. National Park Service, approximately 400 natural, cultural and recreational areas stretch out from sea to shining sea.

Whether you visit the Redwood Forest in northern California or the beaches of Virginia, there is so much of the country to see when you do a road trip.

Consider when and where to perform your dialysis treatments as you trek across the country. Such planning shouldn't get in the way of exploring the wonders of the US. If you are an in-center hemodialysis patient, you must book in advance to dialyze at a nearby center.

This should be done at least three months beforehand to ensure that you can get a space. If you treat your kidney disease with home dialysis, be sure to make room for your PD or HHD machine and supplies alongside your road trip gear. You will want to create a clean and draft-free area in order to properly perform home hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis. If your trip lasts longer more than 10 days, have your PD or HHD supplies delivered to your destination so

that you don't need to carry all of it with you on your travels.

Map out the dialysis center closest to where you would like to go. Ask your social worker to help you locate a center, whether you dialyze there or do home dialysis, in case of any emergencies while on vacation. Once you have the information, you can plan a trip that is both pleasant and convenient for your dialysis treatments.

Take a ride through the Rocky Mountains or mule ride down the Grand Canyon. Drive along the Oregon coast, South Zion National Park in Utah, or the Great Lakes.

When at a campsite, ask a park ranger for a map of the surrounding trails for a hiking adventure. In the evening, you can grill some of your kidney-friendly foods over a campfire for dinner.

When venturing on the highways, pull over to purchase local, fresh foods at a fruit stand or visit a local restaurant. There are many state and county fairs that kick off in the warmer months. During the fall, Albuquerque, New Mexico, holds its annual International Balloon Festival showcasing hundreds of hot air balloons taking flight. Or visit New England and see the beautiful rocky coastline.

Camp near the beaches of Malibu, California, take in the surrounding wildlife outside of Chicago, Illinois or get away from it all on the weekends in Upstate New York.

*<https://davita.com/care-support/travel/>
<https://www.kidney.org/kidney-topics/travel-tips-guide-kidney-patients>
<https://www.homedialysistherapies.com/the-holistic-approach/travel-support/>
<https://www.freseniuskidneycare.com/thriving-on-dialysis/traveling>*