

Dialysis Fact Sheet

Dialysis is used to keep patients with kidney failure alive. It is a process in which a patient's blood is cleansed of toxic substances and excess water. A semi-permeable membrane is used to filter out unwanted substances, while other substances are returned to the body. The alternative to dialysis is kidney transplantation.

Peritoneal dialysis can be done by the patient at home, and uses the lining of the abdominal cavity as the semi-permeable membrane.

Hemodialysis occurs outside the body. Blood is drawn from an artery into a dialyzer, cleansed, and then pumped back into a vein. Patients are usually given three four-hour treatments each week in a hospital clinic.

Risk Factors

Chronic kidney disease has controllable risk factors, including:

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| ◇ high blood pressure | ◇ high cholesterol | ◇ diet |
| ◇ smoking | ◇ obesity | ◇ inactivity |

Lifestyle changes in the early stages of chronic kidney disease can prevent kidney failure. The leading causes of kidney disease are diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Saskatchewan Facts

- The number of people on dialysis in Saskatchewan rises about 10 percent per year.
- Over 700 patients receive care through the province's dialysis program. About 560 receive hemodialysis, and 150 use peritoneal dialysis done at home.
- Dialysis centres in Regina and Saskatoon serve about 75% of patients. Satellite sites serve about 23%, and are located in Tisdale, Prince Albert, Lloydminster, North Battleford, Swift Current, Moose Jaw, Yorkton and now Estevan.
- Estevan's new site operates three days per week, serving 12 patients who previously had to travel to Regina several times a week for dialysis.
- About 1,200 Saskatchewan people in earlier stages of chronic kidney disease attend Chronic Renal Insufficiency (CRI) clinics. These clinics educate patients about how to delay or prevent the need for kidney replacement therapy, and prepare them in the event of kidney failure, which is the last stage of chronic kidney disease.