

Health Update

Easing Treatment For People With Kidney Troubles

(NAPSA)—Researchers may have some good news for many of the more than 8 million Americans who, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, have a major loss in kidney function. That's just as well, because nearly 400,000 of them require dialysis or a kidney transplant to stay alive and the number is expected to reach 650,000 by 2010.

Fortunately, if you or someone you care about is ever in such statistics, new devices for peritoneal dialysis may make life a lot easier. Here's why:

What Kidneys Do And When They Don't

Kidneys balance the chemicals in the body. When kidneys stop working, they can be replaced with a treatment called dialysis.

Usually, that required long hours at a dialysis clinic and often feeling sick and weak afterwards with a reduced quality of life.

New Device

Now, however, patients can use a new at-home peritoneal dialysis system. People using the Liberty Cyclor from Fresenius Medical Care hook themselves up to the machine at night and it pumps in a prescription fluid while they sleep. Through osmosis, the toxins in their blood are pumped out, leaving patients with the freedom to maintain a normal lifestyle during the day.

This treatment is dramatically different from in-center care, which requires travel to the clinic



Some patients, such as Ralph Granese, can do peritoneal kidney dialysis at home.

several times per week and a four- or five-hour treatment each time. It makes for very little privacy and difficulties working and enjoying family activities.

Says one user, Ralph Granese, a professional musician and guitar teacher, "It's the easiest machine to use and it is definitely the closest thing to having a fully operating kidney of any dialysis I can imagine. I do it at night while I sleep, and when I wake up, I can work and carry on with my life. Now I can go out for dinner again with my wife, travel and all of the things that I used to do before." It can be used while traveling with a minimum of specialized equipment.

Leading kidney doctors are becoming strong advocates for home dialysis—patient reports and supporting data show that home treatment drastically improves patients' quality of life by helping them feel better both physically and emotionally.

What To Watch For

Fresenius Medical Care is the world's largest integrated provider of products and services for individuals undergoing dialysis because of chronic kidney failure. The experts there advise that knowing what to look for may help you and your doctor find out if you have kidney disease early. That's important because, often, with lifestyle changes and medications, you may be able to slow down the disease and stay healthy longer.

Signs of kidney disease include:

- Swelling of face or feet
- Feeling more tired than usual
- Nausea/vomiting
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Trouble thinking clearly
- Severe itching
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of appetite
- Urine that is foamy or bubbly, red or pink
- A change in the amount of urine or having to go to the bathroom at night to urinate
- High blood pressure.

If you think you have any of these symptoms, talk to your doctor.

More Information

For more information on kidney health from Fresenius Medical Care, go to www.ultracaredialysis.com. For more information regarding peritoneal dialysis and the Liberty Cyclor, visit www.dreammachine.com or contact Christina Rossi at christina.rossi@fmc-na.com.