

ARE YOU SHORTENING YOUR DIALYSIS TIME?

The hemodialysis treatments you are receiving replace only a small part (less than 15 %) of the normal function of your kidneys. This is far below the 100% of normal kidney function.

If you do not receive enough dialysis treatment your blood will retain too much of the body's waste products and you will always feel sick. If you are being *underdialyzed* you can expect to experience many of the following symptoms:

- Weakness and tiredness all the time
- Loss of real weight
- Poor appetite
- Nausea
- Taste of ammonia in your mouth
- Yellow skin color
- Inflammation of the heart (Uremic pericarditis)

You will also be at higher risk for infection and prolonged bleeding.

On the other hand, most patients who are *well dialyzed* will experience the following:

- A sense of feeling good
- Good appetite with normal weight
- Feeling like dialysis is not necessary when the treatment day arrives
- Yellow skin color fading/faded away

You should recognize that your health and your very life depend on you receiving the right "dose" of treatment. This "dose" includes having a large enough dialyzer, a high enough blood flow, a well functioning vascular access, and enough time on dialysis. There may be other factors that can affect or interfere in your specific situation that may prevent you from receiving the right "dose" of treatment, however, don't let that be because **you** are shortening your dialysis time.

It is easy to decide "coming off" early a few times won't matter, thinking, "It won't hurt me." Chances are this shortened treatment request is not a one-time event. It may occur once a week, several times a month, or maybe even daily. Shortened dialysis time does eventually harm your body by causing the symptoms of being underdialyzed. Being underdialyzed puts additional stress on an already weakened body, which can lead to a shorter life expectancy.

This is why the dialysis staff encourages you to remain on dialysis for your prescribed time, and why they remind you to arrive on time so that you can get your full "dose" of treatment. This is for your benefit, not that of your health care providers.

A well-dialyzed patient will be able to look forward to doing many of the things that were planned before renal disease occurred.

Northwest Renal Network

It All Adds Up...

TREATMENT (4 Hours)	WEEK	MONTH	YEAR
5 Minutes	15 Minutes	65 Minutes (1.08 Hours)	780 Minutes (13 Hours/0.54 Days)
10 Minutes	30 Minutes	130 Minutes (2.17 Hours)	1,560 Minutes (26 Hours/1.08 Days)
15 Minutes	45 Minutes	195 Minutes (3.25 Hours)	2,340 Minutes (39 Hours/1.63 Days)
20 Minutes	60 Minutes (1 Hour)	260 Minutes (4.33 Hours)	3,120 Minutes (52 Hours/2.17 Days)
25 Minutes	75 Minutes (1.25 Hours)	325 Minutes (5.42 Hours)	3,900 Minutes (65 Hours/2.71 Days)
30 Minutes	90 Minutes (1.5 Hours)	390 Minutes (6.5 Hours)	4,680 Minutes (78 Hours/3.25 Days)