



Putting Your Well-Being First!



What is Well-Being?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, well-being is a way of understanding how your life is going. It includes emotions and moods, and overall satisfaction with life (emotional well-being). It is your ability to function well in life. While receiving dialysis you may not always feel your best. Dialysis can make you weak and tired. Your dialysis treatments are helping improve your physical well-being. Do your best to stay active while on dialysis. Both emotional and physical well-being are important to your overall health.

Discussing Well-Being

Well-being can mean different things to different people. When you have kidney disease you may have feelings of anxiety, stress, or even depression. Living with kidney disease can take a toll on your mental and emotional health too. It's important to recognize these feelings. Here are some tips when talking about well-being.

- Respect differences.
- Appreciate a new point of view.
- Don't give medical advice.
- Refer people to their social worker for additional services.
- Focus on the good things happening in your life.
- Recommend journaling dreams and goals.
- Suggest that it is important to stay connected to those who love you.

Can Well-Being be Improved?

Improving your well-being is possible. Adjusting to dialysis and lifestyle changes takes time. Make time to adjust to your new way of life. Figuring out what is most important to you is a good place to start. From there, you can figure out what you need to do to make sure you are taking care of yourself and improving well-being.

Think about joining a support group for people with kidney disease. You can connect with people who are going through the same things you are. Peer mentoring programs are also available. In these programs, you can find a peer mentor for support. Each of these suggestions can be powerful ways to improve your well-being.

Maintain Your Physical Well-Being

Keeping good health is an important part of feeling as good as possible while on dialysis. The National Kidney Foundation offers steps to stay healthy:

- Lower high blood pressure.
- Manage blood sugar levels.
- Use less salt.
- Eat more protein.
- Get your vaccinations, especially flu.

Regular exercise adds to your well-being. It can give you more energy. And you may sleep better. Start slowly and build your strength. Take your time. Even a short 5- or 10-minute walk, or chair-yoga each day can improve your overall health and well-being. Always talk to your doctor before starting any type of exercise.

Your diet also matters to your overall health. Choosing kidney-friendly foods is a good place to start. Talk with your dietitian about foods that are best for you. Every kidney patient's diet is different. Your diet will depend on your treatment plan and other health issues.

Keep a diary of foods you eat. The diary will help you understand your eating habits. It will track the good and not-so-good foods you are eating. Share your diary with your dietitian at your facility.

Many kidney-friendly recipes are available on the Internet!

- [American Kidney Fund Kidney Kitchen](#)
- [DaVita Kidney Friendly Recipes](#)
- [Fresenius Kidney Care Kidney Friendly Recipes](#)
- [National Kidney Foundation: Find a recipe that's right for you](#)



Tips for Managing Your Well-Being

It's important to take care of yourself. By doing so, can you live your best life while on dialysis. Know that there will be good and not-so-good days on dialysis. When you recognize and accept this, it is easier to make the not-so-good days better. According to the American Psychological Association, these are some tips to help you manage your overall well-being:

- Stay connected with friends and family.
- Keep up with your hobbies and things that interest you.
- Consider activities such as gentle forms of chair yoga, meditation, or prayer.
- Make time to be outdoors. Sit on a porch or take a walk.
- Seek support such as peer mentoring, or a support group.
- Give back. Volunteer or be helpful to those you love.

Additional Resources

- American Association of Kidney Patients: [A Healthy Start for a New Year](#)
- American Kidney Fund: [Mental Health and Kidney Disease](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Live Well with Chronic Kidney Disease](#)
- Life Options: [Exercise: A Guide for People on Dialysis](#)
- National Kidney Foundation: [Simple Yoga to Feel Better](#)