



What is Peritoneal Dialysis?

It is a method to remove waste and excess water from the blood and it is used to treat people with kidney failure.

The abdomen contains a natural lining called the peritoneal membrane. There is an 'outer' and 'inner' layer (or membrane). During an operation a single tube (catheter) is placed between the layers. The catheter is permanent and allows special dialysis fluid to be drained in.

The membrane acts as a filter, so waste and excess water are removed from the blood and into the fluid. After a few hours this fluid is drained out and replaced with fresh fluid (exchanged) so the process can start again. An exchange takes about 30minutes and the fluid needs to be changed four times per day.

Who can have peritoneal dialysis?

Most people can have peritoneal dialysis.

There are some medical conditions which would prevent this sort of treatment e.g. previous major abdominal surgery. You will be advised by staff.

What is the daily routine?

The fluid is changed four times per day. It can be changed after as little as two hours or after six or seven hours during the day.

The treatment is flexible and can be adapted to fit around work routines or travel arrangements. Fluid remains in overnight but does not need changing.

What is Automated Peritoneal Dialysis (APD)?

Instead of changing the fluid during the day you can attach to a machine which will exchange the fluid during the night. You are connected to the machine for about 9 hours. You will need fluid in during the day.

Where does the treatment take place?

On peritoneal dialysis you manage your own care so, after a short training period, the treatment takes place at home.

What about going on holiday?

With the required notice, fluid can be delivered anywhere in the UK and most destinations abroad. There is usually no charge for this service.

What are the risks?

There is a risk of infection. You will be taught how to minimize this risk. The training programme will teach you how to deal with any other problems. Trained staff are available to offer advice.

Where can I get more information?

Staff can answer any further questions you might have. There are also a number of useful websites:

The National Kidney Federation is a nationwide support group and resource for information. Their address is NKF, 6 Stanley Street, Worksop, S81 7HX.
Telephone: 0845 601 0209, Email: nkf@kidney.org.uk or visit their website www.kidney.org.uk

Kidney Research UK is the leading UK charity funding research that focuses on the prevention, treatment and management of kidney disease. The charity also dedicates its work to improving patient care and raising awareness of kidney disease.
Visit their website: www.KidneyResearchUK.org

The Kidney Alliance is jointly formed by the Renal Association and the National Kidney Federation to bring together the patients' voice and professionals committed to renal medicine.
Telephone: 01483 724 472, Email: www.kidneyalliance.org

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