What to Do When You Need Dialysis During an Emergency

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Agency: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP).

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Source: https://www.cdc.gov/kidney-disease/caring/index.html

Key points

- Kidney dialysis is a treatment to filter the blood for people with kidney failure.
- For some people, dialysis is needed as often as 3 days per week.
- Emergencies or natural disasters can make it hard or impossible to get dialysis. Find out how to be prepared.

Dialysis in an emergency

During a natural disaster or other emergency, getting kidney dialysis may not be possible. Power could be out for several days or even longer. Roads may also be closed so you can't get to your dialysis center or a hospital.

If you have a home dialysis machine, you may be able to do manual exchanges until the power comes back on. You might also consider buying a small backup generator so you have continuous power.

Coping with challenges

If you receive kidney dialysis at a center but can't get treatment, these steps can help safeguard your health:

1. Pack an emergency kit, and make sure to include:
   - Contact numbers for your doctor, your regular dialysis center, and another dialysis center near you.
   - A list of your medicines and at least a 3-day supply of each one.
2. Follow the 3-Day Emergency Diet. Following this diet **could save your life**.
3. If you need to go to a shelter, tell someone in charge about your medical needs.
4. Make sure your dialysis center has your current phone number and address in case they need to contact you.

5. Register with your water and power companies ahead of time for special priority in restoring your service.

If you need immediate assistance

Call the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) help line at 1.855.NKF.CARES (1.855.653.2273) or the Kidney Community Emergency Response (KCER) hotline at 1.866.901.3773.

You can find additional information and resources to help you prepare for an emergency.

Links retained from the CDC article

3-Day Emergency Diet: https://www.kcercoalition.com/contentassets/6270a03f0aef48ee8bb83100f04e37f2/kcer_-3-day-emergency-diet_final_508.pdf

additional information and resources: https://www.kcercoalition.com/