

# Starting haemodialysis

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**Your blood results are now at a level that means you need dialysis to keep you well. To help you make the transition from pre-dialysis to haemodialysis, there are a few changes that you need to be aware of, which this leaflet will explain.**

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**Haemodialysis Unit:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dialysis days:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dialysis start time:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Preparing for haemodialysis

Before you can start dialysis, we will need a recent blood sample to look for blood borne viruses, such as Hepatitis B, C and HIV. If any of these tests are positive, your dialysis will go ahead but with extra precautions. All patients are tested every three months, so that everyone is protected. We will also ensure that we have swabbed your skin to make sure that if you have any bugs on your skin, we try to get rid of them using special soap and nasal cream for five days before we start dialysis. This reduces the risk of introducing infection into your blood.

Please think about how you will get to the dialysis unit. If you drive, we would advise you to get someone to bring you in for the first few sessions until you know whether you will be well enough to drive after your treatment. Parking is free of charge at Windsor and Bracknell and a parking permit can be given for the Royal Berkshire Hospital and West Berkshire Community Hospital. If you require hospital transport, please let us know as soon as possible. You will need to be ready two hours before your treatment time.

## About the haemodialysis sessions

When you begin dialysis, you will be allocated a named nurse responsible for your care.

Each dialysis treatment takes between four and five hours. You will start by doing two hours for your first session; each session will increase by an hour until you reach four hours. To ensure that you are dialysing adequately, the dialysis nurses will take a series of blood tests every month. Please ask them to explain the results to you.

For those of you who have regular EPO injections, please let the haemodialysis team know how many EPO injections you have at the start of HD so they can then make provisions to administer them once your home supplies are used up. We will cancel any further deliveries and you will then receive your EPO directly into the machine while having dialysis. You will also receive intravenous iron while dialysing, if required.

Some of your other medications may also change. The doctors will tell you when to stop taking

the sodium bicarbonate and the water tablets, and possibly reduce blood pressure tablets.

**On the day of your first dialysis treatment, please do not take your blood pressure tablets.** Please bring them in with you and ask for further instructions. If you take Alpha Calcidol (One Alpha) tablets, these will be given to you while you are dialysing.

You may already be on dietary and/or fluid restrictions; these may change as you become established on haemodialysis. The dietitians will use the monthly blood tests to advise you on the most appropriate diet for you and will see you whilst dialysing.

You will no longer need to attend the Low Clearance Clinic. An appointment will be made for you to attend the Dialysis Clinic soon after you have started dialysis treatment. You will need to ask for a new dialysis awareness card so that the information on it shows your new treatment.

**Remember, it may take a few weeks before you begin to feel better as you adjust to the changes in your blood result levels and the new dialysis routine. If you have any concerns or need advice, please contact your haemodialysis unit (see below).**

## Your Haemodialysis Units

### Benyon Haemodialysis Unit

North Block, Royal Berkshire Hospital  
London Road, Reading RG1 5AN  
Tel 0118 322 8360/1  
Charge Nurse: Ion Buric  
Lead Nurse: Rizhuanah Wiles

### Huntley and Palmers Haemodialysis Unit

North Block, Royal Berkshire Hospital  
London Road, Reading RG1 5AN  
Tel 0118 322 8518/9  
Charge Nurse: Ion Buric  
Lead Nurse: Rizhuanah Wiles

### Windsor Dialysis Unit

Old Ambulance Building  
Maidenhead Road, Windsor SL4 5EY  
Tel 01753 866008  
Charge Nurse: Jimmy Govere  
Lead Nurse: Rizhuanah Wiles

### Bracknell Dialysis Unit

Brants Bridge  
Bracknell RG12 9BG  
Tel 01344 662960  
Sister in Charge: Grace Silva  
Lead Nurse: Rizhuanah Wiles

### Enborne Dialysis Unit

West Berkshire Community Hospital  
London Road, Thatcham, Berkshire RG18 3AS  
Tel 01635 273640  
Sister in Charge: Marion Weaver

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**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

Department of Renal Medicine, September 2023. Next review due: September 2025

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