



Starting haemodialysis

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.

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
Sister in Charge: Sanjeela Khadka
Lead Nurse: Rizhuanah Wiles

Bracknell Dialysis Unit

Brants Bridge
Bracknell RG12 9BG
Tel 01344 662960
Sister in Charge: Jennie Cadiz
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

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

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

RBFT Department of Renal Medicine, July 2026. Next review due: July 2028.