

FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL HEART MONTH

Take Steps to Keep Your Heart Healthy on Dialysis

Heart disease is very common in people with kidney disease or kidney failure. In fact, it is the leading cause of death in people with kidney failure. But there are things you can do to keep your heart and blood vessels healthy. If you already have heart disease? You can take steps to keep it from getting worse.

What is heart disease?

Heart disease describes a number of disorders that can affect the heart or blood vessels. Doctors call these disorders **cardiovascular disease**. (Cardio means “heart” and vascular means “blood vessels.”)

Your heart and blood vessels work together to bring oxygen to all parts of your body, including your brain, heart, legs, and lungs. Having damage to either your heart or your blood vessels can be very serious. It can lead to chest pain, heart attack, stroke, or even death.

Can dialysis patients do anything to maintain heart health?

Yes. People on dialysis have special health needs. Your healthcare team will develop a treatment plan based on your individual needs.

You can also follow these ten “Heart Tips” for a healthier heart.

- Follow a heart-healthy diet
- Get regular physical activity
- Keep your blood pressure and cholesterol levels under control
- Keep calcium and phosphorus in balance
- If you have diabetes, keep your blood sugar under control
- If you have anemia, get treatment for it
- Stop smoking
- Reduce stress
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Take prescribed medications.

