

Learn about conservative care

You may find that a care plan that does not include dialysis or transplant may be the best option for you.



What is conservative care?

Conservative care focuses on managing kidney disease symptoms without dialysis or transplant. Earlier in your CKD journey, this will likely be exactly like the usual treatment you get from your kidney doctor. If your kidney disease progresses and becomes severe, palliative care and/or hospice will be needed to help you stay comfortable at home and maintain your quality of life.



Choosing conservative care

For some people, dialysis may not improve their kidney failure symptoms and could worsen quality of life rather than improve it. People who may not benefit from dialysis include those who have other diseases like end-stage heart or lung failure or terminal cancer, or those who are debilitated or demented.



Getting the support you need

If you feel that dialysis is not the right choice for you, share your feelings honestly with your friends and family. Help them understand why conservative care is important to you.



Talk to your care team

Your care team can help you understand your life expectancy and how to make the best decision for you. You can discuss:

- The option that will give you the best quality of life
- The pros and cons of dialysis treatment
- Your wishes about treatment for your kidney failure
- How dialysis treatment may impact your overall health and any other health conditions

**If you choose conservative care**

Make your friends and family aware of your choice. You should complete advance directives, including a living will and a durable healthcare power of attorney, in case you become sick or the unexpected happens.

Some people who choose conservative care meet resistance in healthcare settings due to lack of understanding. Talk to your nephrologist, palliative care team, or hospice team about how to handle this.

**If you change your mind**

It is your right to change your mind about treatment at any time. If you want to start dialysis, discuss that with your nephrologist right away. Changing your mind late in your disease may be difficult or unsafe and could lead to complications.

**We are here to help**

Your care team is ready to support you along the way while respecting your healthcare wishes.