

# Understanding peritoneal dialysis

Peritoneal dialysis (PD) is a treatment option for end-stage kidney disease that is done at home. During PD your blood is filtered naturally using tiny blood vessels in the peritoneum, the lining of your abdomen.

## PD catheter placement

Before you begin PD, you will need an access site called a PD catheter for treatment. A PD catheter is a small plastic tube placed in your abdomen. A short piece of the tube will remain outside your abdomen and will be visible.

## How does PD work?

PD requires a small catheter in your abdomen. The catheter connects to either a dialysis machine or a solution bag to complete a three-part process called an exchange:

A cleansing fluid called dialysate will fill your belly through your catheter. This takes about 10 minutes.



The dialysate absorbs the waste, toxins, and excess fluid from your blood that your kidneys can no longer filter out.



The dialysate is then drained from your peritoneal cavity and the waste, toxins, and excess fluid are removed along with it. At the same time, your peritoneum holds back the important things your body needs, like red blood cells and nutrients.

You will do training with your care team to make sure you are comfortable and confident doing PD on your own.

## What are the types of PD?

### Continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD)

CAPD is done without a machine and requires 3 to 5 exchanges per day, for 20 to 30 minutes each. CAPD gives you more flexibility to treat from home, at work, or while traveling.

### Automated peritoneal dialysis (APD)

APD uses a machine called a cycler to perform each exchange. This can be done as one long session on the cycler while you sleep or shorter sessions throughout the day.

## Benefits of PD

- More freedom and flexibility in your treatment schedule
- More time at home with family and friends
- More independence and sense of control in your treatment plan
- Flexibility to do it on your own without a care partner
- Easier travel
- Potentially fewer dietary restrictions and medications
- No needles required and blood never leaves your body
- Fewer trips to the dialysis center (typically twice a month for lab work and a monthly visit with your doctor)

## Things to consider

- No days off as PD treatment is typically done every day
- Extra precautions may be necessary if you have pets in the house
- Swimming can be limited (showering is ok once fully healed)
- Storage needed at home for supplies
- Diabetes management may need adjustment due to glucose (sugar) in the PD solution
- May need to adjust work schedule during PD training (usually 2-4 weeks)

## Set yourself up for PD success

Keeping your PD catheter healthy is key to effective dialysis. It's important always to use proper hygiene. This can help you avoid an infection called peritonitis. You will be trained to take these steps to avoid peritonitis:

- Keeping your PD catheter and exit site clean and dry
- Using good hand hygiene and masks during treatment
- Checking your access site daily for redness, tenderness, or swelling

It's important to act early and contact your care team if you have any concerns.



### We are here to help

We are here to support you along the way. Reach out if you have questions about your peritoneal dialysis options.