

## ADHERENCE

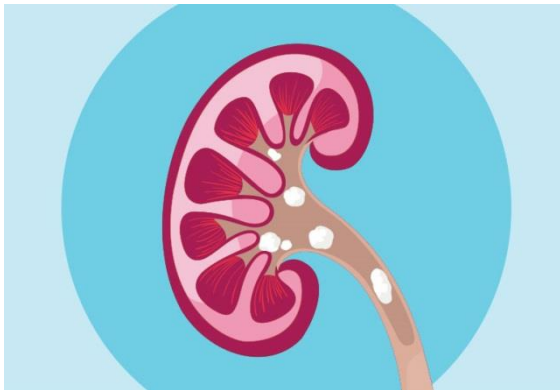
### Tips for transplant recipients for post-transplant success

#### GENERAL

You are a very important part of the transplant team and must take ownership of your health. We support you with useful tips how to contribute to your long-term post-transplant success.

#### LEARN ABOUT YOUR MEDICATIONS AND TAKE ALL MEDICATIONS AS PRESCRIBED.

Ask your healthcare team about how the medications work to keep you healthy and why you



need to take them. Immediately after receiving a transplant, your healthcare team may need to adjust dosing or medications until they find the right regimen for you. Keep a list of your medications with you in case you need to share them with other healthcare professionals or in case of an emergency. Your medications are the lifeline to your new organ and it is very important to be very consistent taking them all. It may be helpful to use pillboxes and set alarms to make sure you take your medications

as directed to help ensure you do not miss doses.

#### ATTEND ALL FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM.

Some patients are surprised to learn that once you are discharged from the hospital you will have many follow up appointments! Often appointments are weekly, then monthly, then less frequent as time goes on and you are doing well with your kidney transplant. In fact, you will have to continue to see the transplant team on an ongoing basis (typically at least yearly) after your medications and labs are stabilized post-transplant.



#### HAVE ALL THE LAB TESTS REQUESTED BY YOUR HEALTHCARE PRACTITIONER DONE ON TIME.

The blood tests your doctor recommends are very important to monitor your new organ, especially to detect any rejection episodes, and to monitor drug levels. They allow your doctor to react quickly to treat any abnormal results. At first, there are many lab tests required, but in time they will be much less frequent. Be sure to have labs drawn at least a week prior to your appointment with your healthcare team. Ask for a copy of your lab results to review with your healthcare practitioner.

#### BE HONEST WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM ABOUT ANY SIDE EFFECTS YOU EXPERIENCE

You need not suffer. If you are not feeling well or experiencing side effects, explain your symptoms to your healthcare team accurately and how they are affecting you. Everyone is different so a symptom that someone else can bear may not be tolerable to you. Your healthcare team may be able to offer tips for coping with medication side effects, prescribe additional medication to address the side effect, or may consider lowering a dose or changing a prescription if needed.

## LET ALL YOUR OTHER (NON-TRANSPLANT) HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS KNOW ABOUT YOUR TRANSPLANT.

Be an active partner in your care. No question is stupid. Different people worry about different things, so if you are wondering or worried – ASK! It might help to write out your questions before your appointment so when you arrive so you don't forget, get rushed, or side tracked.

### ASK QUESTIONS!



Be an active partner in your care. No question is stupid. Different people worry about different things, so if you are wondering or worried – ASK! It might help to write out your questions before your appointment so when you arrive so you don't forget, get rushed, or side tracked.

### BE INFORMED.

Make sure you understand why tests or procedures are being done or why medication is being prescribed. You must take ownership of your health. After a doctor's visit, ask for your lab values - don't leave the doctor's office without them! You are a very important part of the transplant team. Speak up and be an advocate for your health and well-being.

### SEEK SUPPORT!

If you have emotional, dietary or other concerns talk with your healthcare practitioner and ask for a referral to a specialist who can help. Dietitian who can help you understand your nutritional needs better. Physical therapist who can help you get on a physical fitness track. Social worker can help if you are feeling anxious or depressed. You can also find support in other transplant recipients



### EXERCISES



While you are in the hospital after your surgery, you will slowly increase your activity. Walking is one of the most important things you can do on your road to recovery. Once you are home, you should do some type of exercise every day. Check with your transplant team before you begin an exercise program. It is common for transplant recipients to be afraid they may harm their new organs.

Regular exercise will not harm your new organ. It helps your heart, muscles and circulation, and helps you control your weight and blood pressure. Exercise burns calories, lowers cholesterol and helps you maintain strong bones. It can also

help you relax, sleep better, and improve both your overall physical and emotional well-being.

## BE REALISTIC ABOUT YOUR GOALS.

The longer you have been ill, the longer it will take to get your strength back. Your transplant team can refer you to a physical therapist or help you plan an exercise program. You can begin with walking. Start out gradually and add to your program as your strength and endurance increase.

## LISTEN TO YOUR BODY!

If you feel pain or extreme tiredness, you have done too much. Be sure to warm up and cool down with each session. Drink extra fluids on hot days and carry water with you. Ask your transplant team about public pools, hot tubs, and spas. You may not be able to use them if you are at risk for infection due to the anti-rejection medicines.

## WE ALL HAVE GOOD DAYS AND BAD DAYS.

If you're feeling tired, exercise for a shorter period of time or take the day off. If you have pain or pressure in your chest, neck or jaw, unusual shortness of breath, a rapid or irregular heart beat, dizziness or light headedness, unusual sweating, nausea or abnormal pain, stop your exercise and call 911 if you feel it is an emergency. At the very least, call your transplant team and tell them about your response to exercise



## Tips to make exercise more fun

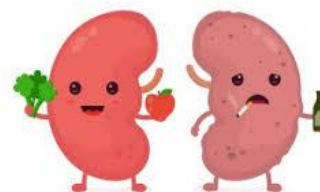
- ✚ Join a nearby community center or health club and take a friend with you.
- ✚ Exercise with a friend—your dog is always up for a walk.
- ✚ Schedule exercise when it is convenient and when you feel energetic, not tired.
- ✚ Walking costs nothing more than a good pair of walking shoes. It can be done anywhere, even in shopping malls during bad weather.
- ✚ Choose activities you enjoy. Have fun and reward yourself.

## DIET

After transplant, you will need to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle. This helps prevent problems like diabetes, osteoporosis, and heart disease. Weight gain can happen after transplant due to an increased appetite from steroids, unhealthy eating habits, lack of exercise, and family history of obesity. Making healthy food choices can help prevent these problems.

## Achieve a healthy weight and help reduce your risk for heart disease!

- ✚ Eat regular meals: 3 meals per day or small, frequent meals.
- ✚ Control portion sizes at meals.
- ✚ When dining out, control portion sizes by splitting a meal with someone or ordering the kids portion size.
- ✚ Choose healthy snacks.
- ✚ Limit intake of high calorie, high fat sweets such as cakes, cookies, ice cream, and candy.
- ✚ Make physical activity part of your daily routine at least 4-5 days a week.



### Eat a heart healthy diet by:

- ✚ Choosing lean meats. Choose fish and skinless poultry more often than red meat. Consume 6-8 ounces per day. Trim the fat off the meat, and remove the skin from poultry before cooking.
- ✚ Lower your use of butter and lard. Choose margarine that is trans-fat free.
- ✚ Use olive oil, canola oil, or other vegetable oil with cooking.



- ✚ Avoid high fat, processed meats such as brats and sausage.

- ✚ Choose low fat dairy products such as skim or 1% milk, low fat yogurt, and low fat cottage cheese. Limit intake of high fat dairy products such as whole milk, ice cream, and custards.

- ✚ Choose low fat versions of salad dressings, mayo, sour cream, and cream cheese.

- ✚ Choose baked or low fat versions of crackers and chips.

- ✚ Eat more fiber foods such as whole grain breads and cereals, whole grain pastas, brown rice, dry beans and peas, fruits and vegetables.

## BE CONSCIOUS WITH CARBOHYDRATES

If you have diabetes or high blood sugars, you may need to eat a diet that has a consistent amount of carbohydrate at each meal. Guidelines for this kind of diet include:

- ✚ Eat meals at regular times every day. Do not skip meals.
- ✚ Choose a variety of foods at each meal that includes fruits, vegetables, proteins, and carbohydrates.
- ✚ Eat about the same amount of carbohydrate at each meal. Foods that contain carbohydrate are: breads, cereals, pasta, rice, starchy vegetables such as potatoes, corn, and peas, fruits, milk and yogurt, and sweets.
- ✚ Limit your intake of concentrated sweets such as regular soda, candy, or jams.

## KEEP FOOD SAFETY

Transplant patients are at higher risk of foodborne illnesses. To prevent foodborne illnesses, practice food safety.



- ✚ Avoid entrée items that have uncooked or undercooked ingredients like eggs, poultry, meat, or fish.

- ✚ Avoid buffets. It is hard to control portion sizes at buffets. The buffet may also contain foods that are undercooked or have sat at an unsafe temperature for too long.

- ✚ Make sure to put leftovers in the fridge as soon as you can, or within 2 hours. If the air temperature is above 90 degrees F, put food in the fridge within 1 hour.

Avoid these high risk foods:

Types of Food	High Risk Foods To Avoid
Meat and Poultry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raw or undercooked meat or poultry</li> </ul>
Fish/Seafood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raw or undercooked fish, raw sushi</li> <li>• Smoked fish that has not been reheated*</li> <li>• Partially cooked seafood such as shrimp and crab*</li> </ul>
Dairy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unpasteurized/raw milk</li> <li>• Cheese made from unpasteurized milk such as: feta, brie, camembert, blue cheese, queso-fresco</li> </ul>
Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foods that contain raw or undercooked eggs</li> </ul>
Fruits/Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwashed fruits &amp; vegetables</li> <li>• Raw sprouts (alfalfa, bean, or other sprout)</li> </ul>
Processed Meats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hot dogs, deli meat, luncheon meat that has not been reheated*</li> <li>• Unpasteurized refrigerated pates or meat spreads</li> </ul>

Adapted from: "Food Safety for Transplant Recipients" U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service.

\* Processed meat (hot dogs, deli meat, and luncheon meat), precooked seafood, and refrigerated smoked fish must be reheated to steaming hot or 165 degrees before you eat them.

## IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE TREATMENT

The immune system – the body’s protective system – is in charge of fighting bacteria, viruses, and other pathogens entering into our body, as well as developing an appropriate level of protection. Its main task is to distinguish between the body’s own material and foreign substances, and to destroy the latter. The immune system will attack a new organ too, since it detects the organ as a foreign body. Immunosuppressive medication is required to weaken the immune response to the “foreign” organ, and to prevent the body from rejecting the new organ.

## IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT TAKING MY MEDICATION

Find out as much as possible about the medications you take, and request for help from your treating physician, the transplantation coordinator, or a pharmacist.

Capsules and extended-release tablets should always be swallowed in one piece; they should never be broken, chewed, or opened, otherwise high doses of the active ingredient may be absorbed too quickly.

Certain medications should not be taken with grapefruit juice; please ask your treating physician or pharmacist.

Please contact your transplant physician for approval before you start taking any new medications – including over-the-counter products – including vitamins or herbal medicines.

If you notice any discoloration of the medicine, or it gets damp from humidity, or its texture changes in any way, such as becoming soft or brittle, please do not take it, as it may have lost its efficacy. Please contact your treating physician, or ask your pharmacist for assistance.

**Always keep the list of all the medications you take with you** – in your wallet, for example – in case you need medical attention for a reason other than related to the transplantation.

### Useful tips that help taking the required medication always in time

- ✚ Use a weekly pillbox with daily compartments to organize your medications, and to remember to take them at the right time.
- ✚ Take time once every week to organize your medications for the next week.
- ✚ Always keep your medications in a safe place, away from children and pets.
- ✚ Use an alarm clock to remind yourself to take the medications at the right time.
- ✚ Please consult your transplant physician about the best time for you to take your medications.
- ✚ Create a routine for taking your medication at the same time every day.
- ✚ Make a note in your calendar when a new dose of medication needs to be prescribed to make sure you never run out.

### WHAT SHOULD I KEEP IN MIND IN TERMS OF MY MEDICATIONS WHEN I TRAVEL?

When you travel, always keep an extra dose of your medications with you to be able to take your daily dose even in case a flight is delayed or cancelled.

Keep the contact phone number of the transplant centre and/or your treating physician with you for emergency.

Always keep your medications in your carry-on bag and never in the luggage compartment of the plane where the temperature can get too high or too low, or your medications may get lost.

Keep a list with of all the medications you take with you – in your wallet, for example – and also a note that you are a transplant recipient.

#### References:

<https://www.kidney.org/atoz/content/tips-kidney-transplant-recipients-post-transplant-success>

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