



# SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR KIDNEY TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS

## Diet

It is important to make sure you drink enough fluids after you leave the hospital. 1.5 – 2 L per day is appropriate. It is normal to have a slightly decreased appetite after major surgery. Take it easy and eat what feels right. If your kidney function is normal, you have no dietary restrictions.

- Don't have raw vegetables or salads from outside
- Can have fruits but peeled and washed off properly
- If you are hypertensive, restrict sodium (salt) intake
- Diabetics should follow dietician's advice for sugar control through diet.
- No food from outside is recommended at least for first three months



## Use Alcohol Sparingly

Excessive alcohol drinking can lead to liver problems and dehydration that can hurt your transplanted kidney.



## Do Not Smoke

Smoking can shorten your life and the life of your transplanted kidney. If you smoke, do EVERYTHING you can to try to quit.



## Weight Gain

Weight gain is common after kidney transplantation because, aside from the fact that you may feel better, and food will taste better, your anti-rejection drugs may increase your appetite.

## Tips to Avoid Weight Gain

### Drink plenty of water

We often mistake thirst for hunger. Drink a full cup of water before meals. It makes you feel more full and is good for the kidney

### Eat 3 regular meals

Have a larger breakfast and smaller lunch and supper /dinner

### Eat slowly

To allow brain to register that you are full! Spend 20-30 minutes on each meal

### Choose a regular place to eat and sit down!

### Have 1-2 small snacks in the mid morning and afternoon

Examples of healthy snacks: Fruit ; Unsalted nuts ; Sugar free jelly or pudding ; Light yoghurt.

### If you eat the right food, you don't have to feel hungry.

Choose carbohydrates that are less refined.

- Unrefined carbohydrates come from plant foods in their natural form, for example, fruits, vegetables, grains, and beans. Whole grain (barley, brown rice, bulgur) and cereals are good sources of unrefined carbohydrates.
- It is better to eat fresh fruit than to drink juice, because it contains fiber.
- Remember that potassium restriction is not required with a functioning kidney. You can now eat bananas and dry fruits !!

Eat meat products in moderation, and make vegetable dishes. Trim all fat from meat and remove skin from poultry.

## Activities And Physical Exercise

- Plan on taking pain medicine, if needed, half an hour before trying a new activity. Avoid doing exercises that strain your abdominal incision (e.g. Crunches, heavy lifting) until cleared by your surgeon. (Usually till 4-6 weeks)
- Begin slowly and pace yourself.
- Frequent rest periods.

The following includes common daily activities listed by how much work or energy they require.

Activity	When to Resume
Walking/Exercising	<p>Check with your doctor before doing strenuous exercise like jogging, aerobics, weightlifting and tennis.</p> <p>Avoid exercise if you experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pain in your joints, have chest pain</li> <li>• Have a fever</li> <li>• You are a diabetic and your glucose is over 300mg/dL or less than 70 mg/dL.</li> </ul> <p>Talk to your doctor about these things.</p>
Travel	<p>After discussion with your doctors.</p> <p>Before you travel, check with your transplant team – certain destinations will require special precautions such as: vaccinations or antibiotics.</p> <p>Locate the nearest transplant center at your destination, BEFORE you travel.</p> <p>Take along enough of your medications for your entire trip (include extra doses just in case) and keep them with you at all times (NOT in checked baggage).</p>
Back to Work	After discussion with your doctors.
Taking a Shower	Immediately, but avoid the water to run over your incision. Avoid having the water hit it directly. Dry the incision completely by gently patting instead of rubbing.
Taking a Tub Bath	If you have an incision on your abdomen it is best not to bathe for two weeks to prevent infection and allow for complete healing.
Lifting	With an abdominal incision, avoid lifting more than 15 lb (about the weight of a bag of groceries) for 6 weeks to allow your inner tissues and muscles time to regain their usual strength.

### If you experience any of the following symptoms when you go home, please call the Transplant team doctor on call

- Temperature >100.5F
- Signs of infection (redness, swelling, increase pain, pus)
- Draining wound
- Increased pain despite pain medications
- Rapid weight loss or gain
- Chest pain, shortness of breath, rapid heart beat
- Nausea and vomiting and unable to keep medicines down
- Easy bruising
- Blood in your stool or urine
- Black tarry stools

- Sudden change in vision
- Sudden severe headache
- Leg or calf swelling or numbness on one side of the body or the face
- Difficulty talking

### **Immunosuppressive Medicines**

- Take your medicines regularly on time as prescribed
- Never ever miss on these medicines-even if you have small surgery/ultrasound/or any other procedure and you have been kept NPO (nil per orally)/NBM (nothing by mouth) by your doctor then also these medicines has to be taken with small amount of water
- Do not stop these drugs on your own even if you start feeling better
- If you miss a dose inform your doctor
- These medicines are for life long-always keep a stock of at-least 15 days with you !!!!
- Always take the same brand which is prescribed for you – do not change the brand on your own

### **Tacrolimus level**

- A level of this drug has to be maintained in the blood and hence it has to be regularly checked with blood samples. Give 3 ml of blood sample in EDTA vacutainer (lavender colour) exactly 10-15 minutes before you take the drug  
For e.g. if you take medicine at 10 am then give sample at 9: 45 -9:50 am
- Be sure that last dose was taken at prescribed time only

### **Follow-up Visits**

- Follow up as suggested by transplant team (usually twice in a week for one month then as per doctor)  
It is very important to let all of your other doctors know that you had a kidney transplant

### **Monitoring Your Kidney At Home**

- It is important to check your
  - Fluid intake
  - Urine output
  - Weight
  - Blood pressure
  - Blood sugar level

We encourage kidney transplant recipients to take an active role in monitoring their kidney function.