

What is Home Haemodialysis?

This leaflet is for patients who are suitable for, and are considering using, Home Haemodialysis. If you have any questions, please ask on the unit.

Traditionally, haemodialysis treatment is performed in a hospital setting but we can now offer similar treatment in the comfort of your own home – 'Home Haemodialysis' (Home HD).



Donna, one of our patients having Home Haemodialysis

Why Home HD?

In general, patients receiving Home HD report better quality of life, due to the flexibility of being able to fit in their treatment with work and daily life.

You will notice that we encourage you to dialyse more frequently at home than in the unit. This is because in recent years there has been evidence that more frequent dialysis provides a better sense of wellbeing than the standard thrice-weekly haemodialysis regime. Benefits of Home HD from the patient's perspective include:

- Better quality of life.
- Greater independence.

- Increased freedom and easier travel.
- Reduced dietary and fluid restrictions.
- Reduced symptoms and medication burden.
- Improved recovery time following dialysis sessions.
- Better able to continue in employment.
- Increased duration or frequency of dialysis is associated with improved cardiac health and survival.

What is frequent dialysis?

This can range from (depending on your BMI and blood results)

- Dialysis 4 days a week for 4 hours.
- Dialysis 5 days a week for 3 hours.
- Longer dialysis hours, such as 8 hours overnight (nocturnal haemodialysis).
- Mix of shorter dialysis hours in the week days and longer at the weekends.

Before you embark on Home HD, our Home HD team will guide you to choose a dialysis regime that meets your medical needs and also fits in with your work or daily activities. Your Home HD team will continuously assess and help you to choose the best treatment plan suited for your medical and social needs.

Who is suitable for Home HD?

In general, patients who are suitable for Home HD are those who are able, motivated and willing to learn to carry out the procedure and to continue with the treatment. Some people have support from family, friends or carers to assist them in their treatment at home but this is not essential. If you are interested in Home HD, our Home HD team will assess your medical fitness for the treatment at home.

You will also need to have enough space to carry out dialysis and store supplies at home. We have patients who utilise any spare space they have in their sitting room, dining area, spare bedroom or their conservatory as their dialysis area at home. We will conduct a home visit to help you identify suitable space in your home after our initial meeting with you.

What equipment do we need?

A number of different types of haemodialysis machine are currently available. The NxStage dialysis machine is currently used in our Home HD programme. It is made up of a cyclor (the top part) and the chassis (bottom part) and is two-thirds the height of a washing machine.

Your Home HD team will provide additional written information on the dialysis machine.

We will supply the dialysis machine and medical supplies at the hospital's cost but you will have to find other equipment, such as tables, chairs and storage that may be necessary to set up your dialysis area at home.



In general only small changes to the plumbing system at home are needed to install the dialysis machine. The plumbing work needed is like that of a washing machine requiring a cold water source and a drain. The cost of plumbing for machine installation only is to be paid for by the Renal department.

Right top: This is an example of the plumbing under the sink which is similar to plumbing for a washing machine. The water cost is approximately £18 per year and electrical consumption is comparable to a 100 Watt light bulb being left on continuously.

Stock delivery is once a month and you can co-ordinate with the supplier about the stocks you require. The amount of supplies delivered to your home will depend on your haemodialysis prescription.

Right bottom: An example of a standard monthly delivery for one of our patients.



What is the length of training, and what training will I need?

The length of training will vary as we tailor this to individuals according to their needs. Typically, training for Home HD is carried out by the Home HD Nurse over a period of 2 to 3 weeks. This is carried out in our self-care unit at Bracknell Dialysis Unit where there are ample free car-parking spaces. Usually, the last week of training is conducted at your home, once the dialysis area is set up.

Being a Home HD patient, you will be trained to take your own blood samples and are expected to send monthly bloods as routine. You will be trained to give your own erythropoietin injection at home and you will visit Albert Ward for intravenous iron infusion when needed.

We do understand that taking on Home HD can be a big responsibility to patients and carers. Therefore, we endeavour to provide short-term dialysis on one of the units whenever patients or carers feel that they need respite from dialysis at home.

What support do I get when dialysing at home?

You will be supported by Home HD Specialist Nurse with regular phone calls, emails and home visits, when needed. There is also a 24 hours 7 days a week free technical support helpline provided by NxStage for any technical support. The Home HD Nurse will review your monthly blood results with the doctor and you will be seen in clinic every two months by the Home HD Consultant. Home visits will be organised for routine review of your vascular access (fistula, graft or tunnelled line) and to perform flow assessments on your

vascular access. Regular refresher sessions will be held to optimise your treatment skills at home.

Can I travel with my home dialysis machine?

Freedom to travel is one of the well-recognised advantages of Home HD. The portability of the NxStage machine means that patients can choose to take the cyclor part of their dialysis machine with them on holiday, either locally or abroad. Some patients choose to return to dialysis on a unit during their holiday as a form of respite from frequent Home HD. We encourage you to discuss your dialysis plans with your Home HD team so that you get the most enjoyment out of your holiday.

I am interested, so how do I start?

Please inform your lead nurse or doctor that you are interested in knowing more about Home HD. Our Home HD Specialist Nurse and Consultant will arrange a meeting with you (and with your carer if you wish to involve them). We will also invite you to have a trial of treatment at our self-care unit. The trial period can last up to a week on the specific Home HD prescription tailored to you. You can then take your time to decide whether home therapy is right for you.

If you are already on haemodialysis in one of our units, we will encourage you to start participating in your own treatment – such as measuring your own blood pressure, setting up your dialysis machine and even learning to self-needle your fistula or graft. We believe that all these skills will help with a smooth transition to Home HD. Please speak to our nurses so that we can provide you with our shared-care booklet.

We also encourage you to view 'Donna's Story' which explains and provides more information on Home HD in this short video <https://youtu.be/5qlzH4bl3b0>.

Home HD support

Dr Pablo Justo Avila, Consultant	0118 322 3108
Barbara Harris, Lead Nurse Home Therapy	0118 322 7901
Grace Silva, Home HD Nurse	0118 322 7918
Albert Ward	0118 322 8555
Victoria Ward	0118 322 8882
Benyon Dialysis Unit	0118 322 8360
Huntley & Palmer Dialysis Unit	0118 322 8518
Windsor Dialysis Unit	01753 866 008
Bracknell Dialysis Unit	01344 662 963
NxStage Customer Service	0845 437 9542
NxStage Technical Support	0800 048 8352

Acknowledgment: Information and some diagrams provided/courtesy of NICE and NxStage

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