

# Haemodialysis service



Information for patients attending King's College Hospital main and satellite haemodialysis units

Welcome to the King's haemodialysis service. This booklet explains what to expect when you come for treatment. It also has practical information such as dialysis centre contact details and advice on what to do if you are unwell, so please keep it somewhere safe. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to any member of the team caring for you.

## Confirming your identity

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your **name** and **date of birth** and check your **ID band**. If you don't have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address.

**If we don't ask these questions, then please ask us to check.**

Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

## Quality statement

We aim to provide the best haemodialysis care for you at King's renal unit. You will be offered four hours of haemodialysis three times a week through a fistula (as recommended by the UK Renal Association), unless there is a medical reason that prevents us from giving you this treatment.

We will help you to get involved in your own haemodialysis care because this has many benefits for your health and wellbeing.

## What is haemodialysis?

It is a way of cleaning your blood and removing the toxins and excess fluid that build up when your kidneys are not working properly.

You will start your treatment in our main haemodialysis unit at King's College Hospital, usually having haemodialysis here for one – two weeks before we transfer you to one of our satellite units.

## What happens when I start haemodialysis?

The first person you will meet on our main unit is a member of our nursing team. They will show you to the bed or chair where you will dialyse, and explain what to expect over the next few weeks while you are getting used to your treatment.

Before and after each haemodialysis session, we will measure your weight, blood pressure and temperature, and the nursing team will carefully monitor you during dialysis. As soon as you are ready to get involved in your treatment, we will show you how to do your measurements and your dialysis.

A doctor will review you within the first two weeks of starting haemodialysis. They will discuss your treatment with you, including



reviewing your medical problems, medications, vascular access for haemodialysis (fistula or line), and how you are coping and feeling. Please speak to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns. Let us know if you would prefer to talk to them in a private clinic room.

You will also be reviewed by one of our dietitians, who will help you understand any changes you need to make to what you eat and drink. If you are having haemodialysis through a line, you may also be seen by our vascular access team. They will discuss safer and better long term options with you, such as having a fistula (joining two blood vessels in your arm).

### **If you need support**

Having dialysis can be hard, so we offer counselling support. If you would like more information, please call our counsellors on **020 3299 6132** or **020 3299 6760**.

### **Haemodialysis at a satellite unit**

Once you have had six haemodialysis sessions at the main unit, your care will continue in one of our six satellite haemodialysis units, unless your treatment needs mean you need to stay on the main site. Our satellite units are based in various sites around South East London.

Your doctor and nursing team will discuss with you your transfer to a satellite unit. The transfer usually happens within the first two weeks of starting haemodialysis.

**Please note:** we have limited haemodialysis slots at King's main unit so we can only provide haemodialysis here for patients with **specific medical conditions** – new starters to haemodialysis and very poorly patients.



## King's satellite units

Bromley Satellite Unit: Ringers Road, Bromley BR1 1HX

Dartford Satellite Unit: Darent Valley Hospital, Dartford DA2 8DA

Dulwich Satellite Unit: Dulwich Hospital, Dulwich SE22 8PT

Sydenham Satellite Unit: 9 Worsley Bridge Road, Sydenham SE26 5BN

Thamesmead Satellite Unit: Nathan Way, Thamesmead SE28 0AB

Greenwich Satellite Unit: Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woolwich  
SE18 4QH

Please see page 14 for full satellite unit contact and travel details.

We will try to make sure that you are moved the satellite unit closest to where you live. This might not be possible at first because some satellite units are very popular, and you may need to dialyse at a unit further away from your home for a while. We will move you to your nearest unit as soon as possible.

As you need haemodialysis **three times a week**, your unit will offer you a slot on:

- Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays
- or**
- Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Most people have **four hours** of dialysis at each session, starting at one of three times:

- about 7.30am
- about 12 midday
- about 5pm.

We will try to give you the day and time that suits you. If this is not possible, we will put you on a waiting list for your preferred session. Please ask your named nurse for more details.



## Travel to the haemodialysis units

Most of our dialysis units have parking and all are close to bus routes or train stations. Most people can travel to and from their dialysis themselves. If you have a medical condition that means you are unable to use public transport, please ask your nurse to be assessed for hospital transport. To find out if you are eligible for a disabled badge, please see your GP (home doctor).

## Satellite unit doctors

Each satellite unit has a King's kidney doctor. They will review you during your haemodialysis session every three months unless you need to be seen more often. Please bring a list of your medicines with you to this appointment and ask your doctor any questions you have about your treatment and medications. Let us know if you would prefer to be seen by your doctor in a private clinic room.

## Our nursing team

You will have a named nurse who is the main nurse responsible for your care. They will talk you through your treatment, blood results, clinic letters and medications. You can also ask them questions and talk to them about any concerns you may have.

Each unit also has an overall nurse manager and a nurse-in-charge during each shift. You can ask to speak to them at any time. If you are not satisfied and would like to raise any concerns, you can contact our haemodialysis matrons who lead the haemodialysis service on **020 3299 7766** or **020 3299 6491**.

## Other members of the haemodialysis team

As well as doctors and nurses, there will be many other members of our team at the unit to support you. You will be reviewed at least every six months by our dietitians and our vascular access team will help with any line or fistula problems.



Other members of our team include pharmacists, physiotherapists, social workers, counsellors, transplant coordinators, peer supporters (experienced patients trained to help and support other patients) and dialysis technicians.

## Understanding the medicines you are taking

It is important that you understand the medicines you are being given and what they are for. As well as the tablets you take at home, we will prescribe you medication such as EPO and iron during your haemodialysis treatment.

**If you notice your medicine dose has changed or you are given a new or different one, please ask a member of the nursing or pharmacy teams about it.**

Take all your medications regularly and as prescribed. If you have concerns about a medication that you take for your kidney failure, discuss this with your nurse or doctor.

## Repeat prescriptions/Medication supplies

Please make sure you arrange regular supplies of your medications from your GP surgery. The renal doctors will not provide them, other than some specialist bone medications such as lanthanum and cinacalcet.

When your renal doctor starts you on a new medication, they may provide you with a two-week starter pack and write to you and your GP, asking that the medication is added to your list of medications to be prescribed monthly. **Please contact your GP surgery when you receive this letter to make sure any changes are made.**



## The pharmacy team

King's Pharmacy dispensary: **020 3299 5710**

Fisk and Cheere ward reception: **020 3299 1209**

## Blood testing and other laboratory samples

We will take blood tests and swabs at your first appointment at the main unit and then at regular intervals. This allows us to check how well your treatment is working and make sure you have no infections. Your dialysis doctor, dietitian and nurse will review your blood results every month and use them to adjust your treatment. Your named nurse will discuss the results with you.

You can also see your results on the Renal Patient View website at **[www.renalpatientview.org](http://www.renalpatientview.org)**.

This secure website gives you a convenient and easy way to access your medical records. For information on how to register, please speak to your named nurse or ask for a copy of the Renal Patient View leaflet.

## When you arrive

Please weigh yourself on the scales in our reception area or in the designated place in your satellite unit, if you can. One of the nurses will show you how to use the scales. Let your nurse know your weight at the start of your dialysis treatment.

Please stay in the waiting area until we call you for your treatment. Sometimes, we will call patients in a little early if their condition makes this necessary. We will do our best to start your dialysis as soon as we can, but your treatment may sometimes be delayed due to circumstances beyond our control.



## Hand hygiene and infection control

We aim to ensure our units are safe and clean. When you arrive, everyone – staff, patients and visitors – must wash their hands with soap and water. If you have a fistula, wash this area of your arm as well.

Staff will wear gloves and aprons to care for you, to help prevent the spread of infection. They will not be offended if you ask if they have washed their hands. Please speak to the nurse in charge if you have any concerns.

**Hepatitis B:** We will vaccinate you against hepatitis B before you your dialysis treatment at King's, because there is a tiny risk of you picking up the virus during haemodialysis.

**Diarrhoea:** If you have diarrhoea on your dialysis day, let the unit know as early as possible, because we may need to change the plans for your treatment that day. But please come to your treatment rather than stay at home.

**Covid-19/coronavirus:** We will test you for coronavirus/Covid-19. All patients on dialysis will be tested as per the renal dialysis pathway at King's. Please wear a mask the whole time you are at the dialysis unit and any time you spend on hospital transport to and from home. Coronavirus policies change often and we will do our best to keep you up to date with how they affect your kidney care.

## What can I do during dialysis – and on non-dialysis days – to keep fit and strong?

Kidney disease weakens your muscles so regular exercise will help keep your muscles strong and help you to do your everyday activities.



Exercising during dialysis using a special exercise bike is a good idea and is available in some of the satellite units.

There is a free renal rehabilitation and exercise class at Dulwich Hospital four days of the week. We can also advise you on other ways to keep fit from home. Please ask the nurses or the physiotherapist for more information.

## **Other activities during dialysis**

To help you pass the time, some of our units provide televisions and you are welcome to use your own media player as long as you use headphones so you do not disturb other patients.

Units also free Wi-Fi access to the internet and you may want to bring a book or magazine to read.

## **Doing your own dialysis: shared care and self-care**

We expect you to take part in your haemodialysis. For example, we will show you how to weigh yourself and take your blood pressure so you can do this yourself when you come in for your treatment. Taking part will help you to feel more in control as well as give you more flexibility. Patients who place their own needles have fewer complications and are less likely to need access surgery on their fistulas.

You can build up what you do at your own pace. Some of our patients become confident enough to do their dialysis on their own, either at their satellite unit or at home.

But we know that not everyone is able to take part in their treatment, so we are happy to provide all the support you need.



Your named nurse will talk to you about sharing your dialysis care, but please do not hesitate to ask for more information. You may find it useful to watch the self-care DVD, *Living Life to the Full on Dialysis*, which is available in our units.

## Refreshments

We recommend you bring a packed lunch or snack with you as it can be a long day and you may miss mealtimes. We provide free tea and biscuits.

## Visiting

If there are no infection control restrictions at the time, your family and friends are welcome to visit during dialysis. There are no set visiting times.

## Research

King's is involved in many research studies and improvement projects. You may be asked if you want to help us with these while you dialyse, such as filling in a survey.

## Emergency care

- If you are unwell and it is your dialysis day, please come to your dialysis as usual or call your unit for advice.
- If you are unwell and it is not your dialysis day or your unit is closed, contact either your GP or your local Emergency Department (ED/A&E). If you are seriously ill – for example, you have chest pain – dial 999 for an ambulance immediately.
- Please contact your GP if you have problems that are not to do with your dialysis.
- If you are admitted to hospital, please ask a relative or friend to let us know.



## Going on holiday

We encourage you to go on holiday but you need to plan ahead because you need to continue to dialyse three times a week while away.

## What to do before you book a holiday

Talk to your named nurse or the unit holiday link nurse at least **two months** before you plan to travel. Please do this **before** you book your holiday.

We can then make sure you are well enough to travel and have enough time to help you arrange your holiday dialysis.

Before you go away you must:

- Find a dialysis unit near where you are staying and get **written agreement**. Confirmation (written agreement) of dialysis is required from that unit where patients are intending to dialyse in while you are on vacation. If you go abroad you will probably need to pay for your dialysis.
- Give your King's dialysis unit the name, address and contact details of the unit you will be using.

If you need any help with arranging holiday dialysis, please speak with your named nurse or the unit holiday dialysis link nurse.

## What to do when you come back from holiday

If you are entitled to be repaid the money you spent on dialysis while abroad, please give us the original receipts and make a copy for your own records. Do this as soon as possible – no later than **two weeks** after your return from holiday – so we can reclaim the money for you.



When you get back from holiday you may need to be dialysed at the last session of the day with infection control precautions for up to three months, **unless** you were dialysed in an isolation room when on holiday, in which case you will return to your normal time.

- If you were away for up to two weeks, you will go back to your original dialysis time slot after three months.
- If you were away for more than two weeks, you may lose your original time slot and need to join the waiting list for the dialysis time of your choice. This is because our dialysis slots are in very high demand and we have to make best use of all of them.

## Compliments and complaints

We value your feedback, good or bad, to help us to improve our care. Please take the time to let us know about your experience of our service.

If you have any concerns about our service, please speak to one of the nurses or doctors and we will try to put things right as soon as we can. You can also make comments or raise concerns by contacting the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). Please see page 17 for more details.

We treat every complaint seriously and we will try to resolve it as quickly and as fully as possible.

## Code of conduct

During your time at the renal unit we will explain your treatment and how to raise any concerns so we can resolve them quickly. King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has a zero tolerance policy for any form of verbal or physical abuse. If necessary, your treatment will be delayed or you will be moved to another unit.



## Who can I contact if I have any queries or concerns?

If you have any questions or if there is anything you do not understand, please speak to your named nurse, the nurse-in-charge or the dialysis unit consultant. The matron will visit the unit regularly and can be contacted most days. Please ask if you would like to speak to them about any aspect of your care.

You can email any member of the kidney team using secure NHS email. Please ask your nurse or doctor for the email addresses.

- Haemodialysis matrons, tel: **020 3299 7766 / 6491**
- Kidney consultants (kidney secretaries), tel: **020 3299 6233**
- Vascular access team, tel: **020 3299 6776**
- Dietitians, tel: **020 3299 6250**
- Social worker, tel: **020 3299 2801**
- Counsellors/psychotherapists, tel: **020 3299 6132 / 6760**
- Physiotherapists, tel: **020 3299 6332**
- King's College Hospital Pharmacy dispensary, tel: **020 3299 5710**
- Fisk and Cheere ward reception, tel: **020 3299 1209**
- Transplant coordinators, tel: **020 3299 5803 / 5804**
- Kidney patient peer supporters, tel: **020 3299 1564**

## King's Kidney Patients' Association

King's Kidney Patients' Association is a charity that supports kidney patients in King's College Hospital's renal unit. It is run by kidney patients, their families, friends and carers, and the staff at the unit. To get involved or join the patient forum, please speak to one of our matrons.



## King's Haemodialysis unit addresses and contact numbers

### Acute dialysis (acute team)

Fisk & Cheere Wards: 1st floor, Cheyne Wing, King's College Hospital Foundation Trust, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

Tel: 020 3299 3298 / 4275

Open 8am – 8pm, Monday to Saturday

### Public transport

Trains: Denmark Hill and Loughborough Junction stations

Buses: 35, 36, 40, 42, 45, 68, 176, 185, 345, 436, 468, 484

## King's Main Renal Dialysis Unit

Ground floor, Cheyne Wing, King's College Hospital Foundation Trust, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

Tel: 020 3299 6243 / 6779 / 6247

Open 7am – 10.30pm, Monday to Saturday

### Public transport

Trains: Denmark Hill and Loughborough Junction stations

Buses: 35, 36, 40, 42, 45, 68, 176, 185, 345, 436, 468, 484

Limited parking

## Bromley Satellite Dialysis Unit

1 Ringers Road, Bromley BR1 1HX

Tel: 020 3299 7510 / 7511 / 7513

Open 7am – 10.30pm, Monday to Saturday

### Public transport

Trains: Bromley South station

Buses: 61, 119, 126, 138, 146, 162, 208, 246, 261, 269, 314, 320, 336, 358, 352, 367, 638, N3, N199

Limited parking



## Dartford Satellite Dialysis Unit

Darent Valley Hospital, Darent Wood Road, Dartford, Kent DA2 8DA  
Tel: 03306 781041 (patient line); 01322 927488 / 927487  
Open: 7am – 10.30pm, Monday to Saturday

### Public transport

Trains: Dartford station  
Buses: Fast track 1B, 2B, 422 from Dartford and Gravesend, 428 from Erith, 433 from New Ash Green and 477 from Orpington  
Free parking

## Dulwich Satellite Dialysis Unit

Dulwich Dialysis Satellite Unit, Tessa Jowell Health Centre, 72H East Dulwich Grove SE22 8EY  
Tel: 020 8194 7450 / 7451 / 7452  
Open 7am – 10.30pm, Monday to Saturday

### Public transport

Trains: East Dulwich station  
Buses: 36, 37, 176, 185, 436  
Free monitored parking

## Sydenham Satellite Dialysis Unit

9E Worsley Bridge Road, Lower Sydenham, London SE26 5BN  
Tel: 020 3299 7761 / 7760  
Open: 7am – 10.30pm, Monday to Saturday

### Public transport

Trains: Lower Sydenham station  
Buses: 194, 202, 352, 356  
Free on-road parking



## Thamesmead Satellite Dialysis Unit:

133 Nathan Way, West Thamesmead Business Park, Thamesmead  
SE28 0AB

Tel: 020 3034 1600

Open: 7am – 10.30pm, Monday to Saturday

### Public transport

Buses: 472 stops at the unit and runs to Greenwich, Charlton, Woolwich and Plumstead

Parking is available on site.

## Woolwich Satellite Dialysis Unit

Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Stadium Road SE18 4QH

Tel: 020 8836 6842 / 6840

Open: 7am – 10.30pm, Monday to Saturday

### Public transport

Trains: Charlton, Woolwich Dockyard and Woolwich Arsenal stations are a short bus ride from the hospital

Buses: 161, 178, 244, 291, 386, 469, 486

Parking permit available for patients from the Dialysis Unit

## Sharing your information

We have teamed up with Guy's and St Thomas's Hospitals in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas'. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.



## Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. The PALS office is on the ground floor of the Hambleton Wing, near the main entrance on Bessemer Road – staff will be happy to direct you.

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

Email: **kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net**

You can also contact us by using our online form at  
**[www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals](http://www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals)**

**If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.**







