

# Medicine guide and tracker for dialysis patients

Use this guide to better understand your medicines and use the tracker to help manage them.

Dialysis patients often need to take certain medicines to manage side effects and prevent problems from kidney disease and dialysis. Your doctor may have you take some or all of these medicines, or you may not need any of them. Ask your doctor any questions you have about your medicines or about any other medicines you may need to take.

**Never stop taking your medicines without talking to your doctor first.**

Add all of your prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and supplements to this medicine tracker. Keep this information up to date and share it with your health care team at visits. The first row shows an example of how to use this tracker.

Name of medicine or supplement	Date started	What it is for	Dose	When to take	How often	Type
<i>Example: Blood pressure medicine</i>	<i>5/1/2024</i>	<i>To help lower my blood pressure</i>	<i>1 pill</i>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Morning <input type="radio"/> Noon <input type="radio"/> Evening <input type="radio"/> Night <input type="radio"/> With food	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Every day <input type="radio"/> Once a week <input type="radio"/> Once a month <input type="radio"/> As needed <input type="radio"/> Other:	<input type="radio"/> Over-the-counter <input checked="" type="radio"/> Prescription by: <i>Dr. Sanchez, cardiologist(heart doctor)</i>
				<input type="radio"/> Morning <input type="radio"/> Noon <input type="radio"/> Evening <input type="radio"/> Night <input type="radio"/> With food	<input type="radio"/> Every day <input type="radio"/> Once a week <input type="radio"/> Once a month <input type="radio"/> As needed <input type="radio"/> Other:	<input type="radio"/> Over-the-counter <input type="radio"/> Prescription by:
				<input type="radio"/> Morning <input type="radio"/> Noon <input type="radio"/> Evening <input type="radio"/> Night <input type="radio"/> With food	<input type="radio"/> Every day <input type="radio"/> Once a week <input type="radio"/> Once a month <input type="radio"/> As needed <input type="radio"/> Other:	<input type="radio"/> Over-the-counter <input type="radio"/> Prescription by:

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				<input type="radio"/>  Morning <input type="radio"/>  Noon <input type="radio"/>  Evening <input type="radio"/>  Night <input type="radio"/>  With food	<input type="radio"/> Every day <input type="radio"/> Once a week <input type="radio"/> Once a month <input type="radio"/> As needed <input type="radio"/> Other:	<input type="radio"/> Over-the-counter <input type="radio"/> Prescription by:
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				<input type="radio"/>  Morning <input type="radio"/>  Noon <input type="radio"/>  Evening <input type="radio"/>  Night <input type="radio"/>  With food	<input type="radio"/> Every day <input type="radio"/> Once a week <input type="radio"/> Once a month <input type="radio"/> As needed <input type="radio"/> Other:	<input type="radio"/> Over-the-counter <input type="radio"/> Prescription by:

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## Common medicines for dialysis patients

Use this list to better understand common medicines for dialysis patients and what they do.



### Erythropoiesis-stimulating agents (ESAs)

Erythropoietin (EPO) is a hormone made by healthy kidneys. Its job is to tell your bone marrow to make more red blood cells. This is a process called erythropoiesis.

When you have kidney disease, your kidneys do not make enough EPO. This can lead to anemia. To prevent anemia, your doctor may have you take an ESA. This is a medicine that replaces EPO in your body and tells your bone marrow to make red blood cells.



### Iron supplements

Your body needs iron to make red blood cells. Not having enough iron in your body is one of the most common causes of anemia in dialysis patients. Anemia that is caused by having too little iron in your body can be treated by taking iron supplements.

Your doctor may ask you to take iron pills or have a shot to add iron directly into your bloodstream. Another option is to add a type of iron supplement medicine to your dialysis solution. This medicine gives you the iron you need as you have your dialysis treatment and can help your ESA medicine work better.



### Phosphate binders and phosphate blockers

Phosphorus is a mineral that everyone needs to be healthy. But having too much or too little phosphorus can be harmful. People with kidney disease are at risk of having too much phosphorus in their blood. This can lead to bone disease. Most kidney patients cannot control their phosphorus levels with diet changes alone.

Your doctor may ask you to take a medicine called a phosphate binder to help your body get rid of the extra phosphorus in your blood. When phosphate binders are not working well enough to get phosphorus levels to a healthy range, your doctor may recommend phosphate blockers.

# Common medicines for dialysis patients continued



## Potassium binders

Everyone needs potassium to survive, but having too much or too little potassium is dangerous. Having too much potassium can cause problems with your heart and muscles. When your kidneys are not working well, potassium can build up in your blood.

If you are having trouble controlling your potassium level, your doctor might ask you to take a potassium binder. This is a medicine that sticks to the potassium in your body that comes from the food you eat, to prevent some of it from going into your bloodstream.



## Calcium supplements

Calcium is a mineral that your body needs to form strong bones and teeth. You also need it to help your muscles and nerves work. Having too much or too little calcium can be harmful. When your kidneys are not working well, you may have problems keeping the right level of calcium in your blood.

If you need more calcium, your doctor may have you take a calcium supplement to help raise the amount of calcium in your blood.



## Vitamin D supplements

Your body needs vitamin D to support your bones and to help control the amount of calcium in your blood. Many people with kidney disease have too little vitamin D in their blood. If you have too little vitamin D, your doctor may have you take a vitamin D supplement.



## Blood pressure medicine

High blood pressure is one of the main causes of kidney disease. Kidney disease can also cause high blood pressure. Healthy kidneys help control your blood pressure. When your kidneys are not working well, your blood pressure can get too high. This can cause more damage to your kidneys.

If you are having problems with your blood pressure, your doctor may have you take blood pressure medicine to lower your blood pressure and to protect your heart and kidneys from more damage.



# Allergies and medicine interactions



**Allergies:** Write down any allergies that might affect what medicines you take now or in the future.

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**Medicine Interactions:** Ask your healthcare team about any medicine interactions you should be aware of. A medicine interaction is when two or more medicines, or a medicine and a food, drink or supplement interact in a negative way in your body making it more or less effective or causing unexpected side effects.

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