



School Services

School Guide for Students with End Stage Renal Disease

What is Renal Failure?

Renal Failure is temporary or permanent damage to the kidneys that results in loss of normal kidney function. The causes, symptoms, treatments, and outcomes of renal failure will differ with each patient. Children with renal failure may not have symptoms until 80% of kidney function is lost.

End stage renal disease (ESRD) is when the kidneys permanently fail to work. ESRD requires dialysis or a transplant. The process of dialysis involves removing waste substance and fluid from the blood that are normally eliminated by the kidneys. Two types of dialysis are:

- **Peritoneal dialysis**- This procedure uses the body's own peritoneal membrane (beneath the outer layers of the abdominal wall) to filter the blood. It requires fewer dietary and fluid restrictions and offers more lifestyle flexibility. The treatments take 8 to 10 hours daily.
- **Hemodialysis**-Blood is cleansed outside the body through a machine. The treatments take four hours of time and need to be performed two to three times per week. Hemodialysis requires that a child's diet be limited with regard to fluid, phosphorus, and salt intake

How can ESRD Affect School Performance?

Renal failure can cause learning problems. The build-up of wastes in the body can hamper nerve and brain function. The child's learning can be affected by the

- Problems with concentration/ attention
- Possible language delay
- Difficulties with motor skills
- Delayed cognitive development
- Frequent absences due to illness/ treatment
- Emotional complications (low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, irritability)
- Small stature
- Dietary restrictions
- Physical complications (cramping, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, fever, fatigue, anemia, puffiness, bone pain, insomnia, itching, dry skin)
- Urinary tract infections/ incontinence
- Possible hearing deficit
- Possible neurological problems such as RLS (Restless Leg Syndrome)

How can schools assist students with ESRD?

Academic:

- Start academic interventions under one of two laws: IDEA (Other Health Impairment) or Section 504
- Provide assessment to determine specific academic needs and provide appropriate accommodations and modifications necessary (including, OT, PT, Speech, Visual, and Auditory impairment services, if needed)
- Make schedule adjustments so student does not miss core subjects due to treatment
- Provide part-time homebound services to make up for instructional time
- Schedule a study hall period (to maintain school progress due to absences)
- Provide before and after school tutoring
- Assign moderate work load that emphasizes quality rather than quantity
- Communication between dialysis teacher and regular school, especially for classes missed due to dialysis
- Allow extra time for major projects if needed
- Seat near teacher to help concentration

Social/ Emotional

- Provide activities that build on student's strengths to improve self-esteem
- Assess the student to see if he/she is a candidate for counseling if they become withdrawn or have difficulty with peers or adults.
- Conduct a staff in-service for those involved with the child

Physical

- Frequent communication between school nurse to monitor student's medical needs
- No shower at school (to prevent infection of catheter or fistula)
- No heavy contact sports
- Allow student to carry a water bottle to measure appropriate amount of water needed
- Allow bathroom pass due to high urine output
- Extra time to travel between classes, as needed
- Be aware of arteriovenous fistula(ATF)- (port for connection to dialysis)
- High/ low blood pressure (Do not take pressure on arm with fistula)
- Provide two sets of text books (one for home and one for school-due to fatigue)
- No prolonged sun exposure

Resources

www.kidney.org

www.kidshealth.org

www.aakp.org

The Emily Center (Phoenix
Children's Hospital's Patient/
Family Medical Library)

School Services Department

Children's Health

Children's Medical Center

Dallas Campus: 214-456-7733

Plano Campus: 469-303-4670