

Mobility and Kidney Disease

Mobility is a word that means how well a person can move around. In this month's article, we are going to focus on being mobile (i.e. moving around) in a safe and reliable way. Research tells us that mobility is linked to good health; that is, the more mobile a person is (in a safe and reliable way), the better their health. It is important for people who have a chronic disease, like kidney disease, to be mobile daily.

In 2017, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) developed the 4M framework as a guide for healthcare systems to provide high-quality and age-friendly care to older adults. The 4Ms stand for:

What Matters: Understanding what matters to older adults; setting goals with older adults according to their preferences and values to ensure health-related decisions align with what matters to them.

Medications: Reviewing medications and changing doses or prescriptions as needed if the medications do not align with the older adult's goals or have an effect on their mentation and/or mobility.

Mentation: Monitoring cognitive function and screening for potential changes like delirium, dementia, or depression that may affect older adults' mobility and what matters to them. Mentation can be thought of as mental activity, such as reading, doing puzzles, drawing, listening to music, singing, etc.

Mobility: Defined by the IHI as moving around effectively in a safe and reliable way to promote good health and what matters with older adults.

*It is important to note that although the IHI's 4M framework was designed for older adults, the 4M framework can apply to anyone who has kidney disease regardless of their age.

One way to help people with kidney disease be mobile is to follow a low impact exercise plan like the one promoted by the National Kidney Foundation (NKF). A low impact exercise plan is designed to encourage mobility, improve balance, and build strength for people with kidney disease, those receiving dialysis or who have received a kidney transplant.

Please note: It is important to talk with your doctor or kidney nurse practitioner first before trying any of the three types of low impact exercises. Make sure the exercises are appropriate for you to do. See additional tips for exercising safely at the end of the article.

The following boxes provide information on the 3 types of low impact exercises. There are also **links to videos demonstrating the low impact exercises on the NKF website**. Access the link below to watch the short videos.

Please note: the videos remind us to avoid doing the low impact exercises if you are feeling lightheaded or are fluid volume overloaded (i.e., retaining fluid in your body). Also, stop doing the low impact exercises if you become lightheaded. The videos also state which low impact exercises to avoid if you have a peritoneal catheter.

References:

Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) (n.d.). Age-friendly health systems.

<https://www.ihl.org/partner/initiatives/age-friendly-health-systems>.

Kee Lui, Christine (2022). Mobility and what matters: Moving kidney care toward the 4Ms of an age-friendly health system.

National Kidney Foundation (2025, October 28). 15 Safe Exercises for CKD, Dialysis, and Post-transplant Patients.

<https://www.kidney.org/news-stories/15-safe-exercises-ckd-dialysis-and-post-transplant-patients>

Low impact seated exercises: Start with initially or if mobility is limited or if staying seated is necessary.

1. Seated Marching

Sit tall in a chair. Lift one knee, then the other, like you're marching in place.

Duration: 30–60 seconds

Appropriate for: People on hemodialysis (before treatment), peritoneal dialysis (PD), and post-transplant (aerobic starter)

Modifications: Add ankle weights ($\leq 2\text{--}3$ lbs) if tolerated; avoid if very fluid overloaded or feeling lightheaded

2. Seated Calf Raises

With your feet flat, lift your heels off the ground while keeping your toes down. Squeeze calves, then lower.

Repetitions: 15–20

Appropriate for: All dialysis types, post-transplant (once cleared)

Modifications: Add ankle weights if too easy

3. Seated Pelvic Tilt

Tighten your lower belly to flatten your lower back into the chair. Hold, then release.

Repetitions: 10–15

Appropriate for: Hemodialysis and post-transplant

Not recommended: People on PD with a catheter—avoid core strain

Modifications: Skip if you experience back discomfort or abdominal tension

4. Seated Arm Raises

Raise arms forward or to the side until shoulder height, then lower slowly.

Repetitions: 10–15

Appropriate for: All dialysis types, but avoid direct pressure to the fistula or catheter, post-transplant

Modifications: Use light hand weights (≤ 2 lbs) if comfortable

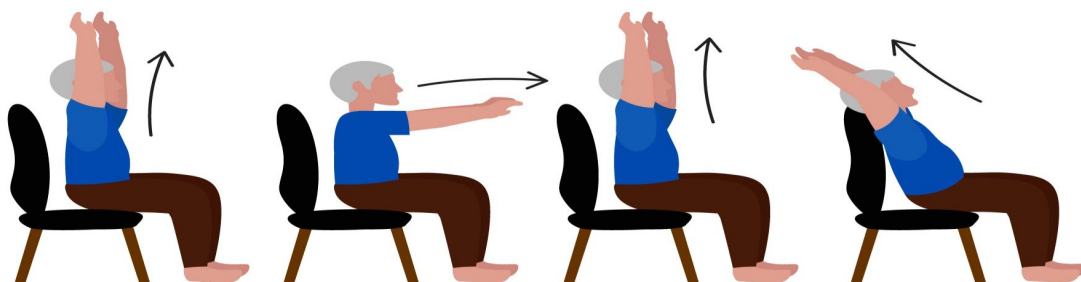
5. Seated Toe and Heel Taps

Alternate tapping toes, then heels, while seated.

Duration: 30–60 seconds

Appropriate for: All dialysis types, post-transplant

Modifications: Add ankle weights if appropriate; stop if lightheaded



Low impact bodyweight exercises: Use your body as resistance to help build strength, improve balance and coordination.

1. Step-Ups

Step up onto a low, stable step, then back down. Alternate legs.

Repetitions: 10 per leg

Appropriate for: Post-transplant (once cleared), hemodialysis (non-treatment day), not recommended for those unstable on their feet

Modifications: Use a chair or railing for balance; go slowly to prevent dizziness

2. Wall Push-Ups

Stand facing a wall, hands at shoulder height. Slowly lower and push back.

Repetitions: 10–15

Appropriate for: All dialysis types and post-transplant

Modifications: Do seated push-ups against a table if standing is difficult

3. Sit to Stand

Sit down in a chair that does not move and stand back up.

Repetitions: 10–15

Appropriate for: Post-transplant (once cleared), hemodialysis (non-treatment day)

Modifications: Stand and hold the back of a chair or counter. Slightly bend knees, then return upright. Avoid if unsteady.

4. Standing Side Leg Lifts

Hold a chair. Lift one leg to the side without leaning.

Repetitions: 10 per leg

Appropriate for: All dialysis types and post-transplant

Modifications: Add ankle weights if able; avoid if balance is poor

5. Wall Angels

Stand with your back against a wall. Slide arms up and down like a snow angel.

Repetitions: 10–15

Appropriate for: All dialysis types and post-transplant

Modifications: Do seated against a firm chair back if standing is hard



Resistance Band Workouts: Resistance bands allow people to work their muscles in a safe and effective manner. The following exercises will help to build strength, improve posture, and support joints.

<p>1. Seated Rows Loop a band around your feet. Pull ends toward your waist, squeezing shoulder blades.</p> <p>Repetitions: 10–15 Appropriate for: All dialysis types and post-transplant Modifications: Use light resistance; skip if the arm has a fistula or a catheter</p>
<p>2. Seated Bicep Curls Anchor band under foot. Curl one arm up slowly.</p> <p>Repetitions: 10–15 Appropriate for: All dialysis types and post-transplant Modifications: Be cautious with a fistula or catheter. Don't use too much resistance</p>
<p>3. Seated Leg Press Wrap the band around the foot. Hold the ends and press the leg forward.</p> <p>Repetitions: 10–15 per leg Appropriate for: All dialysis types and post-transplant Modifications: Perform without a band if resistance is too difficult</p>
<p>4. Lateral Band Pull-Apart (Chest Level) Hold a band at shoulder height. Pull it apart, then return to the center.</p> <p>Repetitions: 10–15 Appropriate for: All dialysis types and post-transplant Modifications: Avoid overexertion; use a light band; skip the arm with a fistula or catheter</p>
<p>5. Seated Toe Flexion with Band Wrap the band over the toes. Point and flex your foot against resistance.</p> <p>Repetitions: 10–15 per foot Appropriate for: All dialysis types and post-transplant Modifications: Stop if cramping occurs or resistance is too much</p>

Video link to watch the demonstration of the low impact exercises on the NKF website: <https://www.kidney.org/news-stories/15-safe-exercises-ckd-dialysis-and-post-transplant-patients>

Being physically active daily, in a safe and reliable way, is important for encouraging mobility, improving balance, and building strength in people who have kidney disease.

The following tips are important to read to make sure low impact exercises are safe and effective:

- ◆ Talk with your healthcare provider first and ask he/she if starting the low impact exercises are appropriate for you to do.
- ◆ Maintain adequate hydration while exercising and rest (or stop) if needed. Ask your DCL team what appropriate hydration is for you.
- ◆ Start slow and gradually progress if needed. Being consistent with doing the low impact exercises matters more than the intensity of the workout.
- ◆ Pay attention to what your body is telling you! Stop if you feel dizzy, short of breath, or have pain.

Summer Picnic For Renal

Summertime generally brings an extra challenge of fluid control for dialysis. This article is a gentle reminder for patients of some foods they may not think of as “fluid” that could be problematic for them and gives some strategies for controlling fluids, along with light lunch ideas.

Foods that count as fluids:



- Sherbet
- Jello
- Watermelon
- Popsicles
- Soup



Tips for Thirst and Fluids:

- Use lemon in your water
- Avoid salt and salty snacks



- Chew gum
- Use small cups

- Choose water instead of sugary dark sodas
- Suck on Ice



Light Summer Lunch Ideas:

- Tuna and Crackers
- Corn on the Cob
- Pasta Salad
- Chicken Caesar Salad
- Sugar Snap Peas
- Roast Beef in Pita
- Chicken or Egg Salad Sandwiches
- Jello and Cool Whip
- Mixed berry Cup



Veggies and Dip (carrots, cucumber, red peppers, and broccoli – all good low/medium potassium choices)



Try these to stay cool:

◆ Ice Chips



◆ Staying in cool areas



◆ Loose and light colored clothing



◆ Wear a Hat



◆ Frozen Grapes, Blueberries and Strawberries

◆ Water - NO SODA



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Summer Camp Missing Vowels Puzzle



Find and circle the words in the list. The vowels are missing in the puzzle.

L	B	B	S	P	Q		B	K		M	G		V	M		T	L	C		F	G	L	W	
H	S	N	C	N	C	W		L	D		R	N		S	S	G	J	L	T	R		K	Z	
J		X		N	D	Z	H	M	C			K	T		N	B	M				X	P	N	
J	W		M	B		S	L		F	T	W		Z	B	H		P	P	Y	D		B	V	
	B	T	P	M	D		Y	F		V	T	Y	L		K		P	V		Q	R	M		
N	V	C	F	L	S	H	T	S		Q	H		B	N		T	X	T	R	B	C	B	X	
	D				S		N	C	T	S	X	K	H	J	Z		L	G	T			R	J	
B	Z	R	R	V		W	R	H	D	T			L	Z	S		G	S	D	S		D		
T		R			H	Y						N	J		P	N	F		T	D		C	X	
H	C	H		R		S	V	D		R	G	G	F		N	S		M	J		S		J	
H		N	D	B			K		R	S		R			N	R	G						L	Q
H	P	L		Y		N	G	L	S	S	S	S	C	N	T			S	L	S	N		G	
M	N	M	B	L		L	S			J	T	W	T	C		L		Y		R	T	Q		
	D	C	L		M	B		N	G	X	C			N	N		R	P	J	J		S	Q	
F	R			N	D	S	H		P	G	R	M	V	T	T	S	D	H	C	K	S	Z	R	
	X	P		R			N	C		G		M		C		B		N	K	G		S	L	
B		C	K	P		C	K	M	R	F	F		T	S	P		R	T	S		N	B	Q	
P	H	C		N			N	G	M	T	N		H		Q	N	K	S		Q		Q		
	R			N	T		T		N	S	G		G	T	T	C		W	D	V	N	H		
S	T	J	Q	M	B	N	Z	J	W	S	Z	Z	S	P	G	Y		W	C		B	K	P	

- ACTIVITIES
- ARTS
- AUGUST
- BACKPACK
- BRACELETS
- BUDDIES
- BUNK
- BUS
- CABIN
- CAMPFIRE
- CANOEING



- CHORES
- CLIMBING
- CRAFTS
- DAY
- EXERCISE
- EXPERIENCE
- FRIENDSHIP
- FUN
- GAMES
- GROWTH
- GUIDE



- HANDBOOK
- HAPPY
- JULY
- JUNE
- KAYAKING
- LAKE
- LIFEGUARD
- ORIENTATION
- OUTDOORS
- PLAYING
- RAIN

- RULES
- SCHEDULE
- SPORTS
- STARS
- SUN
- SUNRISE
- SWIMMING
- TEENS
- TENT
- TREK
- WILDERNESS

