



# MINNESOTA VASCULAR SURGERY CENTER

# HEMODIALYSIS

*A Guide for Patients*

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MINNEAPOLIS VASCULAR PHYSICIANS

## HOURS

Monday 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Tuesday 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Thursday 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Friday 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Same day appointments available.

SCHEDULING – 763-432-4300



*Sustaining life for continued health*

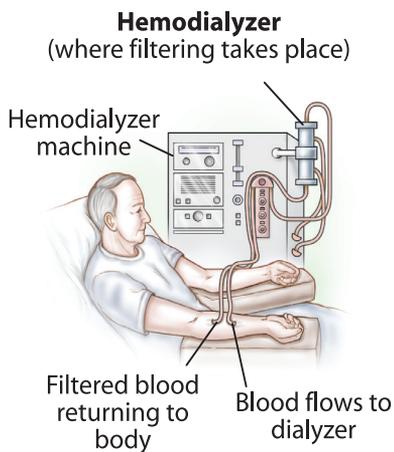
SCHEDULING – 763-432-4300

# HEMODIALYSIS

Your kidneys are organs in your body that remove extra chemicals, waste products and extra water. As blood passes through your kidneys, they recognize these extra things and remove them. You have been told by your kidney doctor that your kidneys are not working as well as they should and that you will need some type of therapy that will “replace” these important organs.

## WHAT IS HEMODIALYSIS?

Hemodialysis is a process that will remove extra chemicals, waste and water from your bloodstream or “replace” your kidneys. Hemodialysis uses an “artificial kidney” or “dialyzer”. As your blood passes through this dialyzer, the extra chemicals, waste and water will be removed.



Your blood will be cleaned of these chemicals and wastes each time your blood passes through the dialyzer.

The amount of waste products and excess chemicals that are removed during a hemodialysis treatment depends on how long you are treated and how fast the blood can move through the artificial kidney.

If you dialyze for three hours and the blood can run through the dialyzer at 400 milliliters per minute, you will have 72 liters of blood pass through the dialyzer. If you dialyze for three hours and the blood can run through the dialyzer at 500 milliliters per minute, you will have 90 liters of blood pass through the machine.

The more your blood runs through the dialyzer, the more chemicals and waste will be removed, the better you will feel. In order to accomplish hemodialysis, you will need an “access” to your bloodstream.

## HOW DO YOU ACCESS THE BLOODSTREAM FOR HEMODIALYSIS?

There are three options for accessing the bloodstream:

- **AV Fistula:** is created out of your own natural blood vessels by connecting an artery to a vein.
- **PTFE Graft:** is a tube made out of synthetic plastic that is surgically placed under your skin. One end of the graft is attached to an artery and the other end is attached to a vein.
- **Tunneled Catheter:** is a plastic tube that is inserted under your skin and “tunneled” into a vein with a portion always residing outside your skin.

## WHAT ACCESS IS RIGHT FOR ME?

The decision about which access is right for you is made by the vascular surgeon who creates your access. The three different accesses are available because there is not any one choice that will work for everyone. There are many factors to consider when choosing an access. Your vascular surgeon will work closely with you to ensure the most appropriate access is chosen for your needs.