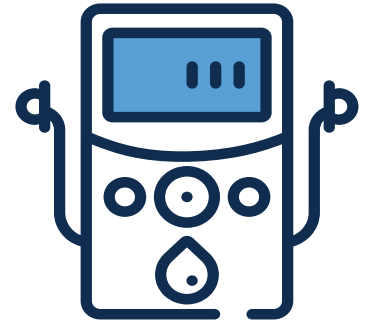
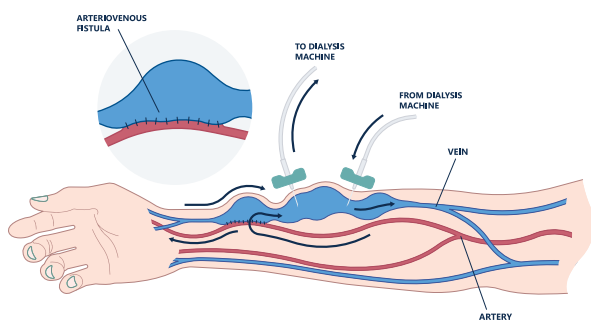


Understanding Dialysis Access

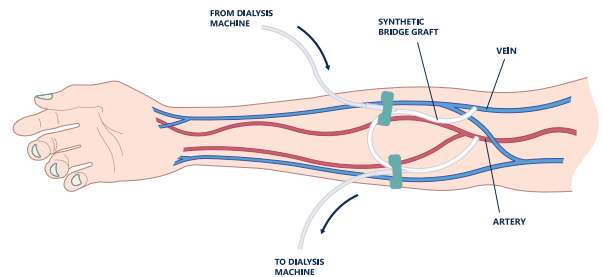


The vascular dialysis access is a way to reach blood for hemodialysis.



Fistula

A surgical connection of a vein and an artery. This creates a larger blood vessel with strong blood flow. It may take up to 4 months before it can be used. A fistula is the **"preferred"** access. It typically lasts longer and has fewer infections and complications than other access.



Graft

An artificial segment of tubing implanted under the skin used to connect an artery to a vein. This access may be used after 2-3 weeks. This would be considered the 2nd best choice of dialysis access.

Day to day care for your dialysis access:

Day to day care for your dialysis access include no blood pressures to be taken, blood drawn, or an IV line started on the access arm. Avoid sleeping on your access arm. Do not wear tight clothing or jewelry over the access site. Usually no more than 10 pounds can be carried using the access arm. Keep your access clean and protected! These helpful hints will aid in avoiding infections, blood clots, and other problems with your dialysis access.