

Patient Information about Acute Renal Failure (ARF)

<http://www.nephrologychannel.com/patient-information-acute-renal-failure-arf/index.shtml>

Acute renal failure occurs when kidney function declines rapidly and the kidneys are no longer able to filter waste products from the blood. Acute renal failure (ARF) is a serious condition that can cause several complications.

Acute kidney failure is classified as oliguric or nonoliguric, depending on the patient's urine output, and also is classified according to the area of the renal system affected. Types include prerenal ARF, postrenal ARF, and intrinsic ARF. Acute renal failure risk factors and causes include kidney disease, liver disease, and heart disease; dehydration; severe blood loss; and urinary tract obstruction (e.g., kidney stones). Symptoms of ARF may include decreased output of urine and kidney pain.

ARF treatment usually involves renal replacement therapy (RRT), also called dialysis or hemodialysis. Here are some questions to ask your doctor (e.g., nephrologist) about acute renal failure. **Print this page** and mark the questions you would like your doctor to answer. Information about ARF can help patients work with their doctors to develop an effective treatment plan and improve the prognosis for many patients with kidney failure.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Acute Renal Failure (ARF)

- Why do you suspect that I have acute renal failure?
- What are the common signs and symptoms of ARF?
- What might be the underlying cause for my kidney failure?
- Am I at increased risk for ARF because of an underlying medical condition?
- If so, is this condition treatable? Is it curable?
- Are my children at increased risk for developing kidney disease?
- What types of tests will be performed to confirm my ARF diagnosis?
- What do these diagnostic tests involve?
- What are my blood urea nitrogen (BUN) and creatinine (Cr) levels?
- What do these levels indicate?

- Is my ARF classified as oliguric or nonoliguric?
- Is my condition classified as prerenal ARF, postrenal ARF, or intrinsic ARF?
- What treatments are available for this type of ARF?
- Do you recommend renal replacement therapy (RRT)? Why or why not?
- What are the different types of renal replacement therapy?
- Which of these renal failure treatment modalities do you recommend?
- Why do you recommend this type of treatment?
- What are the benefits, disadvantages, and possible risks associated with this treatment?
- What exactly does this treatment involve?
- How will my condition be monitored during treatment?
- If this treatment is unsuccessful and my condition worsens, what other therapies are available?
- Might I require a kidney biopsy? If so, what does this procedure involve?
- What do the results of my kidney biopsy indicate?
- Might I require a kidney transplant?
- What is a pretransplant kidney evaluation?
- What does kidney transplantation involve?
- What are the benefits, risks, and possible complications of this surgical procedure?
- How should I prepare myself for surgery?
- How long will I be in the hospital following kidney transplant?

- What types of medications will I have to take after the procedure?
- What are common side effects of these medications?
- What should I do if I develop severe side effects? **Telephone number to call:**
- How often will I have medical check ups? **Next appointment:** Date: Time:
- How can I reduce my risk for complications related to kidney disease?
- What is my prognosis?
- What types of kidney research are being conducted?
- Are there any clinical trials available for people with ARF?
- If so, do you recommend that I participate in a kidney disease clinical trial? Why or why not?
- Can you recommend an online or local support group for patients who have kidney disease?
- Can you recommend an online or local support group for family members of patients with kidney disease?
- Can you recommend additional resources for information about renal failure and kidney disease?

Notes/Additional Information