

Busting the Myth of “Cheating” on the Machine

As a dietitian, I am often asked by patients, “Can I cheat eat on the machine?” Unfortunately the short answer is

NO



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So what does this mean:

Well if you “cheat on the machine”, the food you have eaten will take about 4 – 6 hours to reach your blood stream. This means that the potassium or phosphate in that “cheat” meal will only reach your blood once you have finished your dialysis session and we will only remove it in 2 days time when you come for your next session.



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Here’s the longer answer

There are medical reasons why it’s not good to eat, never mind cheat eat on dialysis.

Eating during dialysis causes you body to draw blood away from your blood stream to help your gut with digestion. This may cause a drop in your blood pressure resulting in “crashing” whilst you are on the machine.

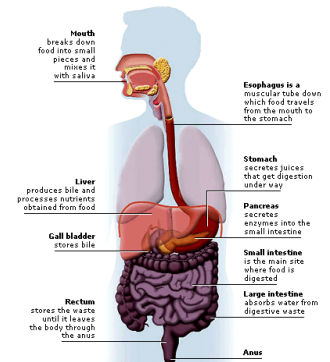
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How long does it take for food to digest in your gut and be absorbed into your blood stream?

Digestion time varies between individuals and between men and women. After you eat, it takes about 2.5 – 3 hours for half the food you have eaten to pass through your stomach and another 2.5 – 3 hours to move through your small intestine. Your nutrients are absorbed in your small intestine.

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You can enjoy the light meal that National Renal Care provide for you during your first hour of dialysis. The meal is renal friendly and light enough not to cause a drop in your blood pressure.



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