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What are immunosuppressants and why will I need to take them every day?

Are there other medicines I will need to take?

How often do I need to see my transplant team after my surgery?

Kidney transplant is a lifelong commitment.

Are you ready?

What will I have to do after transplant to stay healthy and keep my new kidney?

A kidney transplant is more than just having an operation; it is a life-long commitment. Your transplant team will teach you all about your new health regimen while you recover in the hospital after your surgery. It is very important that you follow these instructions closely to stay healthy and keep your new kidney working well. This is a preview of what you can expect post-transplant.

Adhering to Your Post-Transplant Health Regimen

Following your new medical regimen is very important. Following your care team's instructions will not only help you recover, it will also prevent your body from rejecting your new kidney. Adhering to your new medical regimen consists of two main things:

Decide on a care plan...

with your healthcare team and following all specific lifestyle and medication instructions.

- Take all your medications every day at the correct times
- Eat a balanced diet
- Exercise regularly
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Monitor your blood pressure, blood sugar, temperature, etc.

Communicate with your healthcare team...

when you are having difficulty so they can quickly make the appropriate changes to your care plan.

- Schedule regular health visits
- Have your caregiver help you
- Notify your team if you feel sick
- Ask your team questions and tell them about your concerns

What are immunosuppressants and why will I need to take them every day?

When you receive a transplanted kidney, your body will think it is a dangerous, unknown invader, like a virus that can make you sick. In response, your body will attack your new kidney. Immunosuppressants, also called anti-rejection meds, are medicines that make your body less able to recognize your new kidney as an invader. Therefore, it is very important that you take the correct dose every single day for as long as your transplanted kidney still works.

If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember to. But do not take two or more doses to make up for it!

Are there other medicines I will need to take?

Many patients will also need to take steroids as part of their regular treatment regimen. You may also need to take some other medications for a certain amount of time. If necessary, your doctor might prescribe you:

- Anti-bacterial/anti-fungal/anti-viral meds
- Blood pressure meds
- Diabetes meds (insulin)

Managing all your different meds may be overwhelming at first, but future handouts will go over some tips and tricks, including how to make a monthly pill calendar, to help you stay on track.

How often do I need to see my transplant team after my surgery?

After your transplant, you will be required to return to the clinic for regular lab tests over the next 3 months. These lab tests are to make sure your kidney is still working well and that you are in good health. At UCLA, all lab tests start at 6:00 AM and you should plan to be in the clinic for the entire morning.

