

D I A L Y S I S.....It ain't so bad!!!

A funny thing happened to me on the way to the hospital last July...well, it really wasn't that funny! After many tests and poking and prodding, guess what? I've got RENAL FAILURE.

So, what's the use of living? That's got to be the end of like as I knew it! As Frank Sinatra sings, "I'll just roll myself up in a big ball and die." Then I learned, THERE IS LIFE ON DIALYSIS! There must be. There are hundreds of dialysis clinics across the U.S., in foreign countries AND ON CRUISE SHIPS!

Yes you can even travel when you are on dialysis. If you plan ahead, you can make arrangements for your dialysis treatments to and from your destination. A couple of things to watch out for though: If you are over 65, Medicare does not cover you in a foreign country and treatments can cost between \$400 and \$500 each. If you take that cruise, make sure the ship is American registered, not Norwegian, etc., so your treatments are covered by Medicare. So far, since starting on dialysis, I've been to Lake Arrowhead, Waikiki, and Kona. And had wonderful times! No matter where you go, the dialysis technicians are pleasant (even funny), and well trained.

The treatments themselves are a piece of cake - three times a week, 3 hours each time. But listen to this - most places give you your own TV and you can watch the Soaps, or read, or snooze, and you can eat! In my case, I like to eat "snow cones" and apples. Just lay back and enjoy. I think of my treatments as visiting a "sick friend". If you're retired, scheduling your time for the treatments probably isn't too bad, but if you are still working, as I am, you have to keep your datebook handy!

If you know you will be needing dialysis, take a tour of your local clinic and familiarize yourself with what to expect.

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