



Northwest Renal Network

Helping Navigate Kidney Disease

December 2011 Patient Bulletin










Our mission is to promote optimal dialysis and transplant care for kidney patients in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington

We Can Help With:

Care concerns
Patient rights
Transplant
Treatment options
Travel and dialysis
Questions about employment
Access to our library of resources

A Patient Guide to Machine Alarms

Below is information on some of the **alarms** you may see and hear during your dialysis treatment. Your care team can also help you to better understand how the machine operates.

-  **Arterial Pressure:** The pressure in the arterial blood line between your needle and the blood pump. If the machine pulls blood from you faster than the needle can give it, an alarm will go off, stop the blood pump, and close the venous clamp line.
-  **Venous Pressure:** The pressure in the blood tubing between the blood pump and your venous needle. If the machine pulls blood faster than the needle can receive it, an alarm activates, stops the blood pump, and closes the venous line clamp.
-  **Conductivity:** Measures concentrations of dissolved chemicals in the dialysate solution. If it is high there are too many chemicals dissolved. If it is too low not enough chemicals are dissolved. If conductivity gets out of range, the machine opens the bypass valve, and dumps unsafe dialysate down the drain.
-  **Temperature:** Measures the temperature of dialysate solution. If it is too hot, it can damage your red blood cells. If it is too cold, you may feel cold. The machine opens the bypass valve if the temperature gets out of range, and unsafe dialysate dumps down the drain.
-  **Air in Blood:** Monitors the blood in your venous line. If the air detector senses air in your blood, an alarm stops the blood pump and closes the venous line clamp.
-  **Blood Leak Detector:** Monitors for blood leaking out of the dialyzer into the dialysate solution. If a blood leak occurs the dialyzer is thrown away and staff will start over with a new one.
-  **Mute Button:** Silences the alarm for a short while, but does not restart the machine functions. Remember – do **not** reset any alarms without staff permission.

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nwrnbulletins@nw16.esrd.net