Chronic kidney disease treatment programme

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Uw ziekenhuis.

Dear patient,

When your kidneys no longer work properly, many questions arise. The rate at which damage to kidney functions progresses can vary from one person to another and from one disease to another (from a few months to several years). Symptoms that were very discreet at the beginning of the disease become more significant the less well your kidneys work.

There is a chronic kidney disease treatment programme. This leaflet was written to explain the conditions and benefits of this to you.
If you have any questions after reading this leaflet, please do not hesitate to contact us. The contact details are given on the back of this leaflet.

The dialysis team

1 Chronic kidney disease symptoms

The different symptoms of chronic kidney disease are directly related to the loss of the different kidney functions:

- the accumulation of waste products in the blood: fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, nerve damage, arrhythmias, etc.
- the disruption of concentrations of salt, calcium and water in the blood: high blood pressure, difficulty breathing, muscle cramps, heart rhythm disorders, etc.
- a deficiency of kidney hormone: anaemia, high blood pressure, disorders in calcium metabolism, bone deterioration, etc.

As chronic kidney disease is a progressive disease, there comes a time when the accumulation of waste products, water and some salts endangers survival. From this point on, it is

often necessary to initiate replacement treatment: dialysis or transplantation.

2 Conditions for the treatment programme

To be eligible for a treatment programme, you must satisfy a number of conditions. There are two types: medical conditions and other conditions. Your doctor will be happy to explain this to you in more detail.

Medical conditions

You can start a treatment programme if you have chronic kidney disease:

- from the severe stage (GFR<45), as determined by two separate blood tests

and/or

- with more than 1 g/day protein in your urine, as determined twice by urine analysis

You must:

- be over 18 years of age
- not be on dialysis or have not undergone a kidney transplant
- be able to travel to a consultation

Other conditions

- Sign a treatment programme contract following consultations with your general practitioner and your specialist.
- Have your general medical file managed by your general practitioner.
- Be seen by your general practitioner (an appointment or visit) at least twice per year.
- Have at least one consultation per year with your specialist.

3 Benefits of *a* treatment programme

As a patient, the treatment programme offers you several benefits. The most important are:

- The health insurance fund fully reimburses your consultations with your general practitioner and the specialist for your disease throughout the treatment programme.
- You will receive all the information you need to manage your disease in the best way possible (healthy lifestyle, medicines, regular medical check-ups, etc.) through a personal treatment plan.
- You will have access to specific material and have consultations with a dietitian, a podiatrist, a diabetes educator, etc.
- You are guaranteed that your general practitioner and your specialist will work closely together in the management, treatment and follow-up of your disease, tailored to your specific situation.
- The treatment programme contributes to high-quality care.

Specifically as part of the chronic kidney disease treatment programme, you are entitled to a fixed compensation when you purchase a validated blood pressure monitor prescribed by your general practitioner. You can obtain the blood pressure monitor from a pharmacy as well as other channels recognised by the RIZIV/INAMI, such as the health insurance fund's home care shop.

4 Consultations

From now on, visits from your general practitioner (to your home situation) will also qualify to maintain your benefits of the treatment programme. In other words, if you are unable to travel during the course of your treatment programme, you can maintain the benefits of your treatment programme by having

two visits from your general practitioner per year.

If you have started haemodialysis in a centre for haemodialysis during your treatment programme, you are no longer obliged to go to consultations with your specialist (who can sign a chronic kidney disease treatment programme contract). However, you must keep to the visits to your general practitioner (two visits per year).

If you have started peritoneal dialysis during your treatment programme, a fixed amount for peritoneal dialysis in a hospital (during your training to perform dialysis yourself or during any admission to hospital) qualifies for consultation with the specialist.

If you have been admitted to a hospital during your chronic kidney disease treatment programme, this qualifies for consultation with the specialist. You can prove this with the hospital's invoice.

If you are staying in a care home or a nursing home and you are no longer able to travel to a consultation with your specialist for medical reasons, a visit by the specialist is also valid as a consultation. You can prove this with the payment of the fee.

Note

- You must consult your specialist at least once per year (unless you have started haemodialysis)
- Only the consultations are fully reimbursed (at the RIZIV/INAMI rate); visits are not fully reimbursed.

5 How do you enter into a treatment programme contract?

The contract is a written undertaking.
It must be signed by three persons:

- yourself
- your general practitioner
- your specialist

Your general practitioner will send a copy of the signed contract to your health insurance fund.
The treatment programme begins on the date on which the health insurance fund receives the copy.
The health insurance fund's medical advisor will let you and your doctors know when the contract starts.
You are entirely free to determine if and when you enter into a treatment programme contract. Talk to your general practitioner or specialist about it.

6 Working on your health

Proper management of your kidney disease ensures a longer and healthier life. This approach can greatly slow down the progression of your kidney disease and aims to preserve the functioning of your kidneys for as long as possible and reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease.

7 What can you do?

Your personal goals are the guiding principle in the management of your kidney disease.
It is important that you carefully follow the specific treatment plan for your treatment programme.

Healthy lifestyle

- regular exercise
- stop smoking
- a healthy diet
- lose weight if necessary
- do not take any medicines (e.g. painkillers) without consulting your doctor: they may be harmful to your kidneys

Follow-up and treatment

- blood sugar
- blood pressure
- cholesterol and fats in the blood
- protein in the urine
- anaemia
- the condition of your bones and joints
- tobacco use: stop smoking
- an adapted diet: with the help of an experienced dietitian to make sure you take the medicines you need as prescribed

Blood monitoring

Your specialist and general practitioner will determine the frequency with which blood tests must be carried out. Follow these agreements closely.

Check-ups

Go to the check-ups so that complications in other organs can be detected.

Vaccinations

Get vaccinations against flu, hepatitis and pneumococci in consultation with your doctor.

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