Medication in Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD and Dialysis)

If you have chronic kidney disease, or are on dialysis you may be taking quite a number of different medications. It is important to know what medicines you are taking, why you are taking them, and the dose.

Drugs have two names:
An example of this is:
- Generic name: paracetamol
- Brand name: Panadol®, Panamax® made by different companies but both contain paracetamol.

Some important things to remember:
The dose of some medications that you are taking for other illnesses may need to be reduced because you have kidney disease. Always tell your doctor, pharmacist and other health professionals that you have kidney disease.

Always ask your pharmacist or doctor before taking medicine that you buy without a prescription. This includes herbal medicines, over the counter medicines and mineral/vitamin supplements.

Some medications are bad for your kidneys and should be avoided if you have reduced kidney function. Most anti-inflammatories are harmful.

The most important messages:
- Take your medication as prescribed
- Attend appointments and blood tests regularly
- If you have a problem with a medication and want to stop taking it, discuss it with your G.P. or your kidney specialist first
- These medicines are designed to keep you as well as possible for as long as possible.

Take your medication because it can delay the progression of your kidney disease.

You must know:
- What medication you take
- What each medicine is for
- What dose you take.
Medications commonly used in patients with chronic kidney disease and dialysis

- Medication is an important component of your treatment.
- Medication works together with diet, fluid control and when necessary dialysis to keep you healthy.

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| Remove waste products.                                                                  | A build up of waste products in your blood:                                                              | • Sodium bicarbonate  
• Resonium  
• Calcitriol  
• Calcium supplements  
• Phosphate binders. | Removes waste products.                                                                           |
| Maintain electrolyte balance i.e. calcium, potassium, phosphate levels.                  | Electrolytes become out of balance. This can affect how some of your organs work.                        |                                                                                                                                               | Corrects electrolyte imbalance.     |
| Control fluid levels                                                                    | • Puffiness  
• Shortness of breath.                                                                                   | • Frusemide  
(in some cases)                                                                                                                                  | Removes excess fluid.               |
| Control blood pressure                                                                   | Too much fluid in your body causes high blood pressure: may cause headaches, blurred vision.              | • Antihypertensives  
e.g. Coversyl®, Norvasc®, Avapro®.                                                                                   | Removes excess fluid.               |
| Help make red blood cells.                                                               | Anaemia:  
• Feel tired  
• Look pale.                                                                                                      | • Erythropoietin e.g. Aranesp®, Novicrit®  
• Iron  
• Folic acid  
• Vitamin B12.                                                                                       |                                                                                      |
| Maintain healthy strong bones.                                                           | Bone disease:  
• Brittle bones  
• Fracture bones easily.                                                                                   | • Phosphate binders  
e.g. Caltrate®, Alu-tabs®, Mylanta®  
• Calcitriol.                                                                                                                                 |