

# Dialysis: troublesome and high-tech

By **CAROL WRIGHT**  
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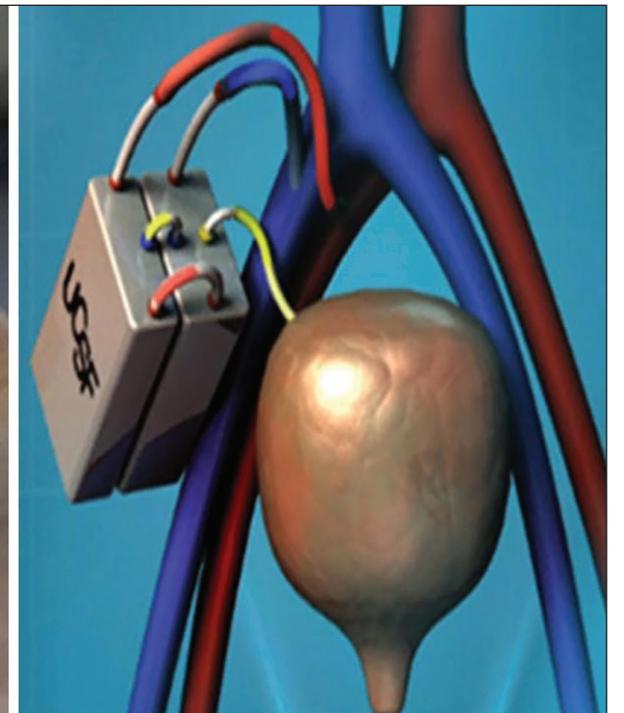
*Editor's note: Carol Wright has been a dialysis patient for six years. She understands how tough dialysis treatments are on the patients and their loved ones. In this story, Wright provides information about dialysis, how it affects the attitude and health of patients, End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) and advanced medical research. She especially expresses her gratitude to the people who took time to be interviewed for this story.*

Dialysis patients are truly heroic and strong. They face their End Stage Renal Disease with much courage. Even long before the coronavirus entered the scene and made life miserable for everybody, these patients have had to struggle much longer with their kidney disease.

Any type of virus or infection is an extra threat to their health, be it the flu, pneumonia or this God awful lingering disaster also known as COVID-19.

When the kidneys aren't functioning normally, fluids and toxins build up. Other vital body organs can shut down as well. Then immunity is jeopardized. Without this marvelous wonder to protect and heal, no one can expect to survive. This is why patients rely on the miracle of a machine and additional equipment that remove fluids and filters out toxins from the blood to prolong their lives.

At the time some people begin dialysis,



*Illustration courtesy FACULTY OF MEDICINE*

Scientists from the University of California at San Francisco have developed the world's first bionic kidney which can replace damaged kidneys easily and effectively. The bionic kidney is a replica of human kidneys. It consists of numerous microchips and is moved by the heart. Like the normal kidneys, it is able to filter waste and toxins from the bloodstream.

they may still be able to excrete urine. However, as time passes others may not be able to excrete any urine.

Two members of Cheryl Brock's family receive dialysis treatments. Brock is the director of volunteer services at William Newton Hospital. She is thankful that her mother, Carol Ann Smith, 83, and sister, Danna Gowdy, 58, can go to the Winfield Davita Dialysis Center at 1315 E. Fourth Ave., where a very dedicated and hard-working staff cares for them and all other patients.

Currently, the staff assists 48 patients. Some patients receive treatments on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Others, like Smith and Gowdy, attend on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Being hooked up to a machine with limited movement is not fun. But both Smith and Gowdy know it is necessary for them to survive. When Smith's nephrologist (kidney specialist) informed her that she

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