



## POSTOPERATIVE ARTERIOVENOUS FISTULA OR GRAFT INSTRUCTIONS

- Two days after the procedure:
  - o Remove the postoperative dressing.
  - o Clean incision sites with soap and water. Always wash your hands well with an antibacterial soap prior to cleaning the site or changing the dressing.
- **Check your fistula/graft each morning for the "thrill" by placing your fingers over the fistula and pressing lightly.** A pulsation and/or buzzing sensation should be felt. Alternatively, you may listen to the fistula with a stethoscope. *If you are unable to feel this sensation or hear the fistula, notify the dialysis unit or physician as soon as possible. Do not eat or drink anything until after you have discussed the situation with a nurse or MD.*
- You may expect some swelling or bruising, particularly after graft placement.
- Avoid wearing constrictive clothing or elastic watchband on the access arm.
- Avoid lying on the access arm.
- Call the office if you notice:
  - o A temperature over 101.5° F.
  - o Purulent or malodorous drainage from the incision.
  - o Persistent pain unrelieved with medication.
  - o **Report any persistent pain or numbness in the hand on the side of the fistula or graft. These could be signs of a serious problem that should be reported immediately.**
  - o Persistent drainage or bleeding from the incision.
  - o Redness or swelling surrounding the incision area.
- Follow up is typically 4-6 weeks after surgery with an ultrasound. Please call the office if you do not have an appointment already scheduled.