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## HOSPICE PATIENT AND FAMILY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### KIDNEY FAILURE

#### What is Kidney Failure?

Kidney failure, also known as end-stage renal disease (ESRD), occurs when the kidneys lose their ability to function adequately, leading to the accumulation of waste products and fluid in the body. This condition can result from various underlying causes, including chronic kidney disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and other kidney-related disorders.

#### What are the Signs and Symptoms of Kidney Failure?

Kidney failure may manifest with a range of symptoms, and its severity can vary. Common signs and symptoms include:

- Decreased urine output
- Swelling in the legs, ankles, or feet (edema)
- Fatigue and weakness
- Shortness of breath
- Persistent nausea and vomiting
- Confusion and difficulty concentrating
- Persistent itching
- High blood pressure
- Abnormal electrolyte levels (potassium, phosphorus, calcium)

#### What potential factors can cause Kidney Failure?

Kidney failure can be caused by various factors, including:

- Chronic kidney disease (gradual loss of kidney function over time)
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Autoimmune diseases affecting the kidneys
- Polycystic kidney disease
- Obstructive disorders affecting urine flow
- Severe dehydration
- Trauma or injury to the kidneys
- Infections affecting the kidneys
- Prolonged use of certain medications

#### What can be done for the person with Kidney Failure?

Managing kidney failure involves supportive care and interventions to address its underlying causes. Here are some general strategies:

- Initiation of dialysis or kidney transplant for individuals with advanced kidney failure.

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- Adherence to dietary restrictions to manage fluid and electrolyte balance.
- Medication management to control blood pressure, blood sugar levels (in the case of diabetes), and treat underlying conditions.
- Regular monitoring of blood tests to assess kidney function and adjust treatment accordingly.
- Modification of diet to reduce the intake of potassium, phosphorus, and sodium.
- Management of complications such as anemia, bone disease, and cardiovascular issues.
- Implementation of lifestyle changes, including regular exercise and smoking cessation.
- Promotion of mental well-being through counseling and support services.
- Education about kidney disease, treatment options, and self-care practices.
- Exploration of palliative care options for individuals with advanced kidney failure not pursuing aggressive interventions.

**Open communication with healthcare providers, involvement in the decision-making process, and collaboration with a multidisciplinary care team are crucial aspects of managing kidney failure effectively. Additionally, connecting with kidney disease organizations can provide valuable resources and support for individuals and their families facing this challenging condition.**