



HEALTH FOR LIFE

Transplant Rejection Episode

A rejection episode is when your body learns that your transplanted organ is not your own (foreign to you). Your body then tries to get rid of it. Rejection episodes happen most often in the first 3 months after the transplant. However, rejection can occur at any time as long as you have your organ. A rejection episode does not mean you are going to lose your organ. It means your body is trying to get rid of the organ. Treatment is necessary to prevent losing your organ.

When rejection is suspected, you will most likely come back to the hospital. A rejection episode is usually treated in the hospital. At the hospital blood tests and a scan or an ultrasound of the organ will be done. For kidney and liver transplants, a biopsy may be done. A biopsy is a test in which a needle is put through the skin into the organ. A small piece of organ is removed. The biopsy will tell the doctors more about how to take care of you. A biopsy is not done on your transplanted pancreas. Your pancreas has enzymes that digest food. These could leak into your abdomen and cause an infection if a biopsy was done.

Signs of a Rejection Episode:

1. Your temperature goes up with a rejection episode. A fever occurs as part of a normal response to fight off foreign bodies (your transplanted organ).

Since fever is a sign of rejection you need to take your temperature 4 times a day. Call the Transplant Office anytime your temperature goes over 101° F.

2. Pain or swelling over your transplanted organ occurs with a rejection episode.

Liver Rejection:

Your liver enzyme levels will change if rejection is happening. This is why you must get blood drawn 3 times a week. Extra blood may need to be drawn if any of your liver enzyme levels change.

Kidney Rejection:

1. Your creatine level goes up if rejection is happening. This is why you must get blood drawn 3 times a week. Extra blood may need to be drawn if your creatine goes up.

(over)

2. Other signs you may see with kidney rejection are:

- The amount of urine you put out will go down
- Your weight will go up
- Your feet, hands or face may swell

These signs happen because your transplanted kidney is not working as well and can't flush water out of your body.

Pancreas Rejection:

1. Your serum amylase may go up if rejection is happening. This is why you must get blood drawn 3 times a week. Extra blood may need to be drawn if your serum amylase goes up.

2. Other signs you may see with pancreas rejection are:

- Your urine pH may decrease
- Your urine amylase may decrease
- Your blood sugars may increase

Remember:

If you have any signs of rejection episode, call the Transplant Office as soon as you can. You will be told what to do so treatment can be started.