

Planning for a Successful Transition to College

The transition to college is tough for anyone, especially someone battling a disease like Nephrotic Syndrome. Hopefully the tips and strategies that I share will help you have a successful transition into college like I did. First, every university in America has some sort of Disability Resource Center. This office helps students with medical and learning disabilities and offers them accommodations. If you provide medical proof of your illness the university will often grant you flexibility regarding attendance, homework, or other things that are hard to complete if you become sick. Additionally, introduce yourself to your professors and let them know your situation. Your professor will appreciate the honesty and it will benefit you if you become sick or fall behind in the class. Next, I would be upfront about your medical situation with your roommate. This will eliminate any questions like “what are all those pills for?” and can eliminate the awkwardness that can come with telling people about your disease. Additionally, depending on the relationship you have with your roommate, it is helpful when your roommate will hold you accountable when regarding things like taking your medicine and testing your urine. Next it is important to remain organized. The first thing I do when I wake up is test my urine and then immediately take my medicine. Doing it right when I wake up gets it out of the way and has just become apart of my daily routine. Sticking to a good routine is important, as it will help you manage your time and remain focused. After class I immediately go to the library and complete all my work before going home. This eliminates distractions and ensures I do not have any assignments hanging over my head. The feeling of being overwhelmed by an assignment is very stressful and can even lead to negative health. Completing all my work in advance frees up my schedule and

relieves me of stress. Also, I use a planner and every month I scroll through my assignments and events I know I have coming up and plan out my month. Additionally, on the first day of class your professor will give you a syllabus. Do not lose these as they will give a summary of the class and due dates for each assignment. Once you get your syllabi, fill out your planner with important dates, as seeing all your assignments will help you plan and manage your time better. Next it is important to maintain healthy habits in college. It is very important to have a stable eating schedule and you should try and eat all three meals of the day. Most college dining halls will include the ingredients used in each dish, be aware of the amount of sodium and other non-healthy spices. Also, nearly every university dining hall will have a healthy food or allergy free section. This station will cook with low sodium and other ingredients in common dietary restrictions. Additionally, use a reusable water bottle and carry it with you everywhere you go. It is crucial to remain hydrated and bringing your water with you everywhere will ensure you drink enough water. Finally, it is essential to find an extracurricular activity that you want to participate in. College is all about branching out, meeting new people, and growing up. Do not let Nephrotic Syndrome hold you back, if you want to do something, go do it! Whether it is joining a team or club, playing basketball at the rec. center, or getting a job, it is important to find something you enjoy to spend your time doing. Taking time enjoying yourself and your friends will make you feel good and relieve you of stress. Personally, I have suffered from Nephrotic Syndrome since I was two and have had a numerous amount of relapses throughout my life. I am currently a sophomore at the University of Kentucky and I have not relapsed since being at school. I attribute this to

following these steps and a little bit of luck. I hope these steps will help you in your successful transition to college while suffering from Nephrotic Syndrome.

Checklist

1. Visit the academic resource center
2. Introduce yourself to teachers
3. Be open with your roommate and friends
4. Stick to a routine when taking medicine and doing homework
5. Plan out your semester with a planner or calendar
6. Eat healthy (check out the allergy free section)
7. Drink plenty of water
8. Find a hobby