



END STAGE RENAL DISEASE  
NETWORK OF TEXAS

January 2021: Volume Two | Issue One

# HEALTH & H.O.P.E.

MOTTO: HELP ON PROCESSING EVERYTHING DIALYSIS



"May this New Year bring hope, joy, provision, happiness, and health. Let us make it the best year yet!" - Dany A.

"This year may each day provide you love, joy, renewed strength and peace" – Betrice W.

"This past year has been full of challenges and uncertainties for us all. May the coming year bring more joy, love, and positivity. Here is to better times ahead for us all!! Wishing you a happy, safe and healthy 2021." – Arlandra T.

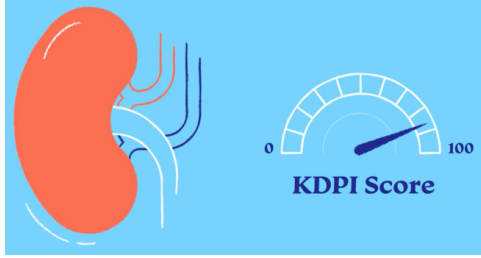
"A very Happy New Year to all! May 2021 be full of blessings, joy, and happiness. To our renal community caregivers, thank you for all you have done in 2020 to keep your patients, your co-workers, and your family safe and healthy. Not only were you the true heroes of 2020, but you will also be the heroes in 2021 too. A new adventure is around the corner." - Debbie D.

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Vaccinations

The United States experienced challenging months with many Americans being infected by the COVID-19 virus. This virus affected everyone in 2020 and with the help of scientist and other medical professionals a vaccination has been developed to reduce the chance of getting the virus. Please speak with your medical provider for more information about getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Continue to practice health precautions by wearing your mask, disinfect common areas and items as well as practice social distancing.



# What is Kidney Donor Profile Index (KDPI)?



The kidney donor profile index (KDPI) combines a variety of donor factors such as donors age, medical history, and other health components into a single number that summarizes the likelihood of failure after a deceased donor kidney transplant. The KDPI scores from 0 to 100 which tells you how long the deceased donor kidney

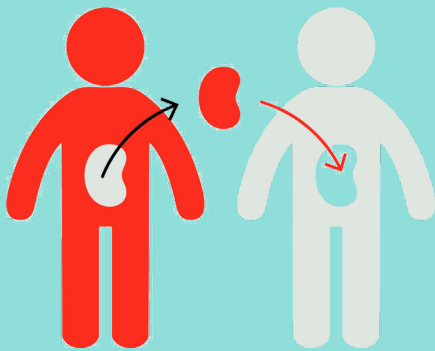
is likely to function in your body. Kidneys with a KDPI below 85 can last up to 15 years, while kidneys with a KDPI above 85 may not last quite as long but can still give you many years free of dialysis. Getting a transplant means that you can do more of the things you love, and studies show that the sooner you get a kidney transplant, the better it is for your health. You can get a transplant sooner by consenting to high-KDPI and increased risk kidneys when medically appropriate. To learn more about high-KDPI and increased risk kidneys, watch the End Stage Renal Disease National Coordinating Center (NCC) video,

Understanding High-KDPI and Increased Risk Kidneys. Ask your doctor if a high-KDPI or increased risk kidney is the right option for you.



[Understanding High-KDPI and Increased Risk Kidneys](#)

## Do you know you can join several transplant centers lists?



Click [here](#) to find transplant centers in the United States. If you are interested in being added to the transplant list, please speak with your doctor and dialysis center healthcare team.

## Are you interested in becoming a Trailblazer?

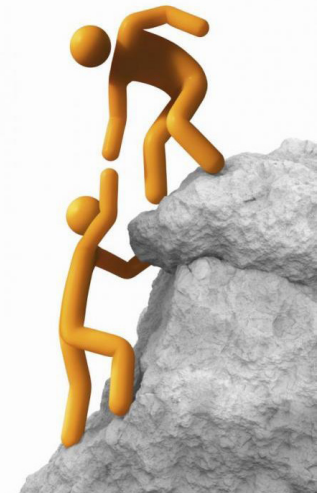
Transplant Trailblazers are local (e.g., same or sister facility or program, same transplant center, same healthcare system), goal-focused, who are paired with local dialysis patients that may include family or caregiver interaction. The partnership between individuals is designed to support dialysis peers on kidney transplant, although peers may remain in contact after being placed on the waitlist, if they choose.

More information is available on the [ESRD NCC Kidney Transplant Hub](#). This Hub is available for patients to receive information on each step of the kidney transplant process.

Home Dialysis Heroes are local, goal-focused, may include family and caregiver interaction, and are paired with local dialysis patients. The formal support program is designed to promote patient peer experiences with the goal of dialysis

peers making a referral to a home program, although peers may remain in contact indefinitely, if they choose.

For more information on how to become a Transplant Trailblazer or Home Dialysis Hero please speak with your Transplant Center Healthcare Team or Dialysis Facility Healthcare Team. You may also contact ESRD Network 14 for more information.



# Kidney Disease Can Increase Your Risk for COVID-19.

**1 in 7** people has kidney disease, and most don't know it. Get screened today to know your risk.

## Schedule Your **FREE** Kidney Screening:

Step

1

### Choose Your Screening Location

**Drive-up Screenings at Texas Kidney Foundation Office**  
4204 Gardendale #106, San Antonio, TX 78229

**Community Screenings at Various Locations**

Visit [TxKidney.org/events](https://TxKidney.org/events) to see our calendar of free screenings

Step

2

### Scan QR Code to Register

Fill out our quick registration form and we will schedule your free screening appointment



### What to Expect at Your Kidney Screening:

- Kidney screenings test for high blood pressure, kidney disease, and diabetes.
- Takes approximately 15 minutes.
- You will receive guidance for next steps.

Interested in hosting a drive-up screening at your church, community center or other location?  
Call Texas Kidney Foundation at (210) 396-8440.

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KIDNEY  
FOUNDATION**

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# SPEAK UP!



You are part of your healthcare team!



**YOU, your family members and care partners, and the facility staff are a TEAM. You make decisions about your health and address your concerns TOGETHER!**

**If you have a problem in your unit, here are some steps you may take:**

1. Speak with your social worker, head nurse, administrator, or doctor to discuss the problem.
2. Follow the steps of your facility's grievance process if the problem is not solved.

## The ESRD Network is Here for You!

You should **FEEL SAFE** when you file a grievance.

When you file a grievance, you have the right to be **ANONYMOUS**.

You can file a grievance at **ANY TIME**.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services defines a grievance as a formal or informal written or verbal complaint that is made to any member of the dialysis or transplant center staff by a patient, or the patient's representative, regarding the patient's care or treatment.

**If the problem continues, or if you prefer to speak with an outside agency first, you should contact:**

### Your ESRD Network

**877-886-4435** ESRD Network of Texas, Inc.  
4099 McEwen  
Suite 820  
Dallas, TX 75244  
[www.esrdnetwork.org](http://www.esrdnetwork.org)

OR

### Your State Agency

**888-973-0022** Texas Health and Human Service Commission  
Patient Quality Care Unit  
1100 W. 49th Street  
Austin, Texas 78756  
[www.dshs.state.tx.us/facilities/complaints.aspx](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/facilities/complaints.aspx)

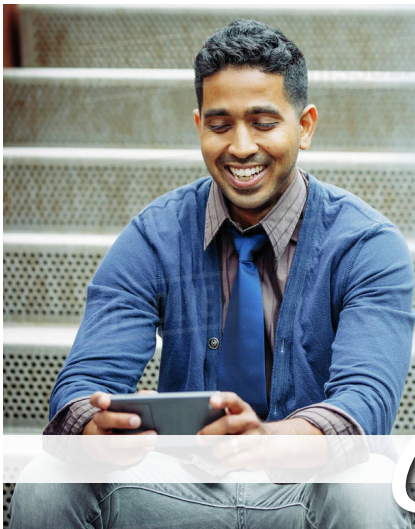
The ESRD Network of Texas (Network 14) is one of 18 non-profit agencies that work under contract with the Centers of Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) who is the federal agency that runs Medicare. Network 14 performs many important jobs for the dialysis and transplant community, including:

- Collecting and analyzing data about dialysis and transplant patients and their treatments
- Evaluating the quality of care and services provided to dialysis and transplant patients
- Supplying professionals with clinical information and data they can use to evaluate and (if needed) improve their services
- Maintaining a grievance procedure to investigate patient complaints about the quality of care provided by dialysis or transplant units





# END STAGE RENAL DISEASE NETWORK OF TEXAS



## The Network is on social media! Visit our social media channels

# Contact us:



Networks 8 and 14 are the End Stage Renal Disease Networks (ESRD) that serve as the Medicare contractor for the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Texas. We are committed to improving the quality and experience of care for all ESRD kidney patients within our four-state patient services area.

**Network 14 Office**  
4099 McEwen Rd, Ste. 820 • Dallas, TX 75244  
Phone: 972-503-3215  
Email: [nw14info@allianthealth.org](mailto:nw14info@allianthealth.org)  
Website: <https://www.esrdnetwork.org/>

Visit our social media channels:  
[Connect with us on LinkedIn](#)  
[Follow us on Twitter](#)  
[Follow us on Facebook](#)



### Skin Care: "Love the Skin You're In"

The skin is our largest organ - It protects our bodies, helps us maintain just the right temperature, and gives us the sense of touch. If our skin is irritated or damaged, it can be very painful. A surprisingly large number of chronic dialysis patients suffer from the tiresome problems of dry skin and itching. These skin complaints are not life-threatening, but they can be very uncomfortable and distressing, and as a result, can affect your quality of life.

**Why does my skin itch?**  
Itching is a symptom that can be caused as a side effect of your kidney disease or dialysis treatment, although the exact cause of itching in dialysis patients is not always clear. Possible causes

may be high levels of the parathyroid hormone, or high levels of phosphate in the blood. Also, calcium released from the bones can deposit in the blood vessels, joints, and skin which may lead to itching. Other possible causes are the retention of toxins, iron deficiency, general inflammation and allergic reactions.

**What can I do?**  
It is extremely important that you monitor your calcium-phosphate balance. Follow your nutritionist's advice to ensure low phosphate intake, and be sure to take your phosphate binders as prescribed by your physician. If you do have problems with itching and/or dry skin, make a point to discuss the



problem with your physician. Your doctor may also be able to advise you if there are any suitable creams or lotions you can use or suggest alternative therapies which will help to alleviate the symptoms.

Click [subscribe](#) or scan the QR code to receive the ESRD Network E-newsletter



The e-newsletter is brought to you by **Constant Contact**



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To file a grievance please contact ESRD Network of Texas Inc. (Network 14) at  
4099 McEwen Rd, Suite 820 Dallas, TX 75244.  
Office: 972-503-3215, fax: 972-503-3219, Toll-free: 877-886-4435,  
Email: [nw14info@allianthealth.org](mailto:nw14info@allianthealth.org), website: [www.esrdnetwork.org/](http://www.esrdnetwork.org/)