

# HEALTH & H.O.P.E.

HELP ON PROCESSING EVERYTHING DIALYSIS

## Fight Germs Like a Superhero



Vaccine shots are like special shields for your body. They help your body make tiny helpers called antibodies – think of them as your body’s superheroes. When you get sick, these superheroes find the bad germs and attack them so your body can get rid of them.

People with kidney disease have a weaker immune system, which makes it harder to fight off illness. Vaccine shots may not stop you from getting sick, but making sure you have all your shots can help your body’s superheroes be ready to fight off bad germs. Ask your doctor or nurse if you have all your shots.

**RESOURCE:** Check out our [Vaccine Activity Book](#) to learn about vaccine shots.

## Benefits of Kidney Donation from Living Donors



Getting a kidney from a living donor has many benefits, like:

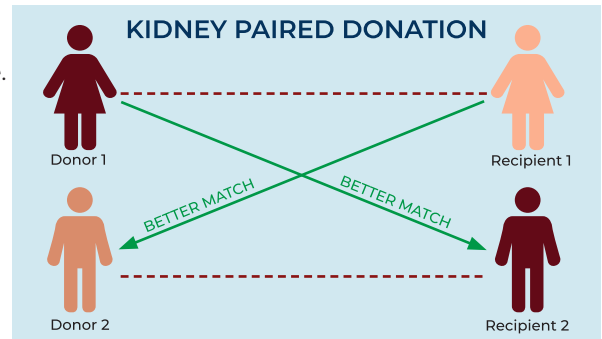
**Shorter Wait Time:** You won’t have to wait years for a kidney transplant.

**Better Match:** Some living donors are family members, so the kidney is a better match.

**Lasts Longer:** A kidney from a living donor can last up to 20 years or more!

**Better Timing:** The surgery can be planned for a good time for you and your donor.

If your donor isn’t a perfect match, they can still donate their kidney and join a Kidney Paired Exchange. This means two donors and two people needing kidneys swap donors so everyone gets a good match. Talk to your transplant team to learn more. Visit the National Kidney Foundation to learn more about [Kidney Paired Donation](#) and [Living Donation](#).



## Get Help With Food, Housing, and Health Care at Findhelp.org



Find free or low-cost help for food, housing, health care, and more at Findhelp.org (formerly Aunt Bertha).

You can get help based on your zip code.

## We Have a New Mailing Address

The ESRD Networks 8 and 14 have a new mailing address.

To mail information to your Network office, send it to:  
**ESRD Network 8**  
 (Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee)  
 P.O. Box 105337  
 Atlanta, GA 30348

**ESRD Network 14 (Texas)**  
 P.O. Box 105337  
 Atlanta, GA 30348



## Learn How Home Dialysis Can Help You

Many dialysis patients want to try home dialysis but worry about what might go wrong. Home dialysis can take time but can also give you more freedom. Dialysis clinics want to help you and will support you the whole way. To start, just ask your clinic or doctor. They have lots of information about home dialysis. It can be very helpful for being independent. Instead of always saying no, try to picture yourself saying yes. Imagine being successful with home dialysis.



**RESOURCE:** Considering Home Dialysis ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))



## Stay Healthy This Summer: DON'T MISS YOUR DIALYSIS TREATMENTS

Summer is here! It's very important to go to all your dialysis treatments during this hot season. When you miss treatments, you can have problems like too much fluid in your body, high blood pressure, trouble breathing, and issues with important chemicals in your body.

Dialysis helps remove extra fluid, clean your blood, and give you needed medicines. Missing or shortening treatments can make you sick and might even send you to the emergency room or hospital. If you need to miss or shorten a treatment, try to reschedule as soon as you can. Don't risk your health—attend all your dialysis treatments!

RESOURCE:  
ESRD NCC – [Don't Play Games](#)

## How to Make a Complaint About Your Dialysis or Transplant Care

If you're not happy with your care at your dialysis unit or transplant center, you can make a complaint. Here's how:

- 1. Talk to Staff:** Tell your nurse, doctor, or social worker about the problem. They might be able to fix it quickly. You and the clinic can try to find a solution that helps everyone.
- 2. Contact Higher-Ups:** If talking to staff doesn't help, or if you can't talk to them, go to the regional office or corporate office of your dialysis or transplant center. You can find their contact details in your unit's lobby.
- 3. Call for Help:** If the first two steps don't work, call your ESRD Network or state survey agency for help. The call is free.

The Network staff can help with complaints from ESRD patients. When you make a complaint, a social worker will look into it. It might take up to 60 days to find a solution. The Network will check everything and may ask the unit to fix the problem. If you're worried about making a complaint, you can ask the Network or state agency to keep your name private.

Speak up—You have the right to question your care. If you are scared to make a complaint, you can request that the Network or the state agency not to use your name when looking into your problems.

### TO FILE A COMPLAINT, PLEASE CONTACT:

**ESRD Network 8**  
(Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee)  
**1-877-936-9260**

**ESRD Network 14**  
(Texas)  
**1-877-886-4435**

## QAPI: Let Your Voice Be Heard

Your dialysis clinic might have a meeting called Quality Assessment & Performance Improvement (QAPI). In this meeting, you can share your worries, ideas, or comments with the clinic leaders. What you say can help make the clinic better. Some clinics might call this meeting something else.

You don't have to wait to be invited. Just ask your clinic manager or social worker if you can go. Before the meeting, write down what you want to talk about to stay on track. After the meeting, check with the manager or social worker about any new plans. Keep sharing your ideas and ask to join another QAPI meeting if you want. You can also tell other patients what you learned.

### HOW TO ATTEND:

- Join the meeting in person.
- Join by phone.
- Write down your questions/suggestions/ideas and give them to your social worker to read during the meeting.
- If your facility has a suggestion box, place your ideas in the box.
- Give your advice to your facility patient representative (FPR). Ask your social worker who your FPR is.

### NCC RESOURCES:

- Because Your Voice Matters ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))
- Understanding and Participating in QAPI ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))
- Overcoming Barriers to Attending QAPI Meetings ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))
- Improving Quality Outcomes: Patients' Experience ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))



To file a grievance, contact the following agencies:

**ESRD Network 8** – Phone: 1-877-936-9260;  
Email: [nw8info@allianthealth.org](mailto:nw8info@allianthealth.org);  
Mail: P.O. Box 105337, Atlanta, GA 30348;  
Website: <https://quality.allianthealth.org/topic/esrd-nw8/> – For patients and facilities in AL, MS, TN.

**ESRD Network 14** – Office: 972-503-3215;  
fax: 972-503-3219; Toll-free: 877-886-4435;  
Email: [nw14info@allianthealth.org](mailto:nw14info@allianthealth.org);  
Mail: P.O. Box 105337, Atlanta, GA 30348;  
Website: <https://quality.allianthealth.org/topic/esrd-nw14/> – For patients and facilities in TX.

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