



# HEALTH & H.O.P.E.

## HELP ON PROCESSING EVERYTHING DIALYSIS

### August is National Immunization Awareness Month

Vaccine shots are like special shields for your body. They help your body make tiny helpers called anti-bodies – you can think of them as your body's superheroes. When you get sick, these superheroes find the bad germs and attack them so that your body can get rid of them. People with kidney disease have a weaker immune system, which can make it harder to fight off illness. Vaccine shots may not always keep you from getting sick so make sure you are up to date on your routine shots that can help your body's superheroes fight off unwanted guests! You can talk to your doctor or nurse to find out if you are up to date on your shots.

**Resource:**

Be sure and take a look at our Flu & Vaccine Protection Crossword Puzzle to learn more about vaccines.

[English version](#)  
[Spanish version](#)

### Reducing Hospitalization



The summer heat is here! This time of year, it is more important than ever to attend all your dialysis treatments. Dialysis patients easily hold liquids, which causes problems such as fluid overload, high blood pressure, shortness of breath, strain on your heart, and dangerous electrolyte imbalances (potassium, sodium, etc.).

When dialysis treatments are missed, your body loses out on one of the few chances it has to get extra fluid removed, blood cleaned and get the necessary medications that you only get at dialysis that your body needs.

Missed and shortened treatments create problems that you do not need or have time for! It can land you in the emergency room (ER) and possibly hospitalized. If you must miss treatment or cut a treatment short, reschedule as soon as possible. Missed treatments are one of the leading causes of hospitalizations. One thing can lead to another, like falling dominos. Don't take a chance on your health!

**Resource:**

[Fluid Overload Brochure \(English\)](#)  
[Fluid Overload Brochure \(Spanish\)](#)

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## QAPI - Let Your Voice Be Heard

Your dialysis clinic should invite patients to participate in a Quality Assessment & Performance Improvement (QAPI) meeting. This meeting lets you talk to the dialysis clinic leaders about your or other patients' worries, ideas, or remarks. The ideas and results of QAPI meetings often affect how the dialysis clinic is run. Some clinics call their QAPI meeting by another name. You do not have to wait to be asked. Ask your clinic manager or social worker if you can attend. Before the meeting, note what you want to talk about with the healthcare team. This will help you stay on track during the meeting. Your ideas can help make patient care better. After the meeting, follow up with the clinic manager or social worker about results or plans made during the meeting that will affect what happens on the dialysis floor. Keep sharing your ideas with the staff and tell them if you would like to attend a future QAPI meeting. If you would like, share what you learn with other patients.

How to attend:

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



## Findhelp.org

Find free or low-cost funds for food, housing, health care, and more at Findhelp.org. Help is based on your zip code.



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: 775 Woodlands Pkwy, Suite 310, Ridgeland, MS 39157; 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: 4099 McEwen Rd, Suite 820 Dallas, TX 75244; Website: <https://quality.allianthealth.org/topic/esrd-nw14/> - For patients and facilities in TX

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