

Dialysis Call-Off Scripts

Cut out these note cards for a quick reference to use when a patient calls to cancel treatment.

Initial Response	Reschedule the Appointment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ask probing questions regarding why the patient is unable to come to treatment; don't just accept the statement that the patient won't be in.<ul style="list-style-type: none">"Can I ask why you are unable to make it to treatment?""Are you able to make it for a portion of your treatment today?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Have a list of available appointments within the next 24 hours readily available for staff to reference quickly. Don't ask the patient if they would like to reschedule – tell them the time you will be placing them on the schedule.<ul style="list-style-type: none">"We have an opening tomorrow at 1 p.m. that I can put you down for. Do you need help setting up transportation?"
Inquire about Illness	Educate about Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">If the patient states illness as the reason for calling off, inquire about their symptoms.<ul style="list-style-type: none">"Can you tell me about your symptoms? Are you having any shortness of breath or chest pain? Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea? Have you had any falls/injuries?""How long have you not been feeling well?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">If patient symptoms seem to be related to lack of dialysis and/or may be relieved by dialysis, educate patient on dialysis resolving symptoms.<ul style="list-style-type: none">"It sounds like you are having some shortness of breath. Some dialysis may help relieve that and if it does not, we can take a look at you and call the doctor if we need to, but we can't do any of this if you don't come to treatment."
Transportation Issues	Final Refusal to Attend/Reschedule
<ul style="list-style-type: none">If the patient states transportation as an issue, inform them that you will refer the social worker to them. It is also helpful to have a list of possible "quick response/scheduling" transportation services near phones.<ul style="list-style-type: none">"I'm sorry you're having problems with transportation. I will transfer you to the social worker's extension to see if they can assist you."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">If the patient insists on not coming to their appointment, remind them of complications that may arise and when/if they should go to the ER.<ul style="list-style-type: none">"Not coming to treatment can cause you to have symptoms such as swelling and shortness of breath. It is also hard on your body to carry the excess fluid and toxins that remain when you miss dialysis treatment.""If you aren't going to make it to treatment, please ensure you are drinking less than 32 oz. of fluid and avoid foods high in potassium and sodium. Do you know which foods I am referring to?""If you experience shortness of breath or chest pain, you need to go to the ER immediately."