

## Topic of the Month

## My Choices: My Lifeline

**Step 1: Plan** Review the following Network and community resources to plan a patient engagement activity to provide patients with information about taking care of their dialysis access.

### Network Resources

- [My Kidney Kit](#) - All pages are available in English and Spanish. Highlighted MKK “My Choices” pages include:
  - [My Choice: Self-Cannulation](#)
  - [My Choice: What I Should Know about Fistulas](#)
  - [My Treatment: How Can I Stay Infection Free](#)



- [Be Safe- Always Keep Your Access Site Uncovered](#) (handout) reviews the safety concerns related to seeing the dialysis access during treatment and ideas for staying warm.

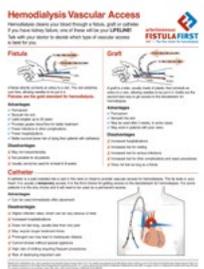


- [Keeping a Healthy Dialysis Access](#) (poster/handout) provides information about the importance of and tips for keeping a healthy dialysis access.



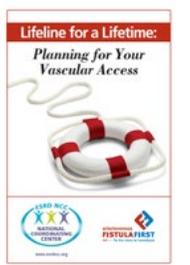
- [“My Journey with Kidney Disease”](#) video shares patient stories addressing questions they wish they would have had answers to when they started dialysis, including decisions related to choice of a fistula. It is available by contacting the Network for the DVD and [online](#).
- [Tips for a Healthy Body Image During Dialysis](#) (brochure) provides tips for coping with dialysis and having a healthy body image.
- [Tips to Ease Needle Fear](#) (handout) helps patients learn how to train their body not to react to the fear of needles.
- [TLC for your Access](#) (handout) shares daily steps to take to care for your dialysis access.

## ESRD NCC Resources



- [Catheter Check Guide for Patients](#) encourages patients with a catheter to check it every day, providing what to look and feel for and steps to take if problems are identified.
- [Catheter Check Guide for Staff](#) provides staff with instructions of what to look, listen and feel for before connecting a patient’s catheter.
- Hemodialysis Vascular Access ([English](#) | [Spanish](#)) provides patients with the pros and cons for the accesses available for hemodialysis, including fistulas, grafts and catheters.
- [How to Keep Your Vascular Access Healthy](#) (handout) provides do’s and don’ts for keeping a healthy dialysis access.
- “Look, Listen, Feel” Access Monitoring Guide ([English](#) | [Spanish](#)) provides guidance on how to monitor your access.
- “Ready, Set, Go” New Fistula Daily Check: [Weeks 1-2](#) | [Week 3](#) | [Weeks 4-5](#) | [Weeks 6-10](#) provides guidance to patients on how to monitor a new fistula.
- “Ready, Set, Go” New Graft Daily Checks: [Week 1](#) | [Weeks 2-3](#) | [Week 4](#) provides guidance to patients on how to monitor a new graft.

## Kidney Community Resources



- [Dialysis Patients Speak: A Conversation about the Importance of AV Fistulas](#) (video) Hemodialysis patients describe their experience and explain why it is important to them that their hemodialysis access be a native vein arteriovenous fistula. Provided by the ESRD Network of New England, Inc.
- [Lifeline for a Lifetime](#) offers online information developed as part of the [Fistula First Catheter Last](#) (FFCL) Workgroup Coalition on how to decide which access is best for each patient and breaks it down into manageable steps.
  - Lifeline for a Lifetime: Planning for Your Vascular Access Patient Planning Manual ([English](#) | [Spanish](#))
- Medical Education Institute, Inc. | [www.meiresearch.org](http://www.meiresearch.org)
  - Home Dialysis Central “Life@Home” articles address how to help you keep a healthy access including:
    - [Hemodialysis Access: Fistula First](#)
    - [Dialysis Needle Fear - Easing the Sting](#)
    - [Dialysis Needles, Self-Cannulation and the Buttonhole Technique](#)
    - [The Art Of Making Your Fistula Or Graft Last](#)
    - [Blood Pump Speed and Your Dialysis Fistula](#)
  - [What You Need to Know to Keep your Fistula Healthy](#) (booklet)
  - [What You Need to Know to Keep Your Graft Healthy](#) (booklet)
  - [What You need to Know to Keep your Catheter Healthy](#) (booklet)
  - [Kidney School Module 8-Vascular Access: A Lifeline for Dialysis](#) is an online course on vascular access. Learn which access is best and why, and how to protect your access so it will last as long as possible. [View Online](#) | Download in [English](#) or [Spanish](#).



## Kidney Community Resources (cont):



- National Kidney Foundation articles | [www.kidney.org](http://www.kidney.org)
  - [How to Dress for Dialysis Access](#). “Rules” when dressing for your access.
  - [Inserting Your Own Needles for Dialysis \(Self-Cannulation\) Is Your Right!](#)
- [Tips for Overcoming Needle Fear](#) (newsletter) shares patients’ tips on how to overcome needle fear from IPRO ESRD Network 2.

### Step 2: Act

Work with your staff and Facility Peer Representative (FPR) to complete a patient activity to engage patients in learning more about caring for their dialysis access.

- Review the [My Kidney Kit](#) pages with staff and patients.
- Talk with your FPR about what resources and activities they would like to see at the clinic to educate patients on caring for their dialysis access.
- Invite your FPR to a team huddle to share their experience with their dialysis access.
- Design a bulletin board:
  - Give out notecards or sticky notes and have patients share their tips for dealing with needle fear and/or pain.
  - Use the Keeping Your Access Healthy poster and highlight education on one of the four strategies each week of the month.

### Step 3: Share

Share what your clinic has done with the rest of the Network!

- Ask your FPR for their feedback and encourage them to attend the next [FPR Connection Call](#) (the third Wednesday and Thursday every other month starting Feb. 2020 at 2 pm CT) to share with others!
- Be sure to share your patient engagement activity with the Network. You can send your activities and photos to our [Patient Services Department](#).

For more information or to file a grievance, please contact

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This resource was developed while under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Contract #HHSM-500-2016-00010C. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. 20.Q-ESRD10.08.041



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