

# Rights and Responsibilities of Dialysis Patients

## Patient Behavior

The purpose of this resource is to help make sure that patients who have displayed abusive or disruptive behaviors are aware of their rights and what they can do to work with the clinic so that they can continue to get dialysis at the clinic.

Every person with end-stage renal disease (ESRD) has a right to choose to get life-sustaining dialysis treatments. To get dialysis in an outpatient clinic, you also have responsibilities to make sure everyone gets safe dialysis care. If you do not follow the rules or act in a way that threatens the safety of other patients and staff, you can be discharged from the clinic.

The Network often gets phone calls from dialysis clinic staff about disruptive or abusive behavior from patients. This can put the patient at risk of being discharged from the clinic and makes it hard for the staff to care for all their patients safely. Staff may need to shift the focus of care they normally provide for all patients to address a patient's disruptive behavior. Additionally, staff may become afraid and avoid the disruptive/abusive patient. The clinic is required to make sure that the rights of all patients and standards of care are being upheld; the rights of one person do not override the rights of others.

## Clinic Discharge

If a patient displays ongoing disruptive behavior (e.g., loud outbursts, name calling, or shouting), the clinic is required to inform the patient of the risk for discharge and will work with the patient to address the issue. If all their efforts to help fail and discharge is the only option, the clinic must give the patient a 30-day notice and try to help the patient find another place to get treatment. However, when a patient is involuntarily discharged from a clinic, another clinic is not required to accept them as a patient.

## My Rights: Discharge

- ♦ You have the right to be informed about the clinic's policies about transfer and discharge. Each clinic has a policy and steps to follow when a patient requests to transfer, decides to stop dialysis or is involuntarily discharged from the clinic.
- ♦ You have the right to receive a 30-day notice of discharge, except in the case of an immediate severe threat to the safety of others

## What happens if I am given a 30-day notice of discharge?

- ♦ The clinic social worker will work with you to try and find another clinic to accept you as a patient during the 30 days you are still at the clinic.
- ♦ The clinic will share the records required by the other clinics to accept you as a patient.
- ♦ A clinic or a doctor CAN NOT be forced to accept a patient. The Network, your state, and Medicare do not have the authority to require you be accepted into their care.
- ♦ You may have to go to the emergency room to get your dialysis. The hospital is only required to give you dialysis if it is an emergency, they may draw labs to determine if you need emergency care. The hospital gives acute care, not ongoing outpatient treatment, so it is unlikely you will get dialysis three times a week like you are used to.
- ♦ Without regular dialysis your life may be shortened.

# Rights and Responsibilities of Dialysis Patients

## My Responsibilities: Behavior

- ◆ Be kind
- ◆ Treat other patients and staff as you would like to be treated, with respect and dignity
  - ⇒ Do not swear or curse at others, this includes staff, other patients, and visitors
  - ⇒ Do not raise your voice, shout, or yell at others
  - ⇒ Do not call others demeaning names
  - ⇒ Do not make sexually suggestive comments to others
- ◆ Never threaten others, act in a violent way, or cause physical harm to anyone or cause damage to the clinic
  - ⇒ Do not say that you will beat, hit, kick, kill, punch, shoot, or slap anyone
  - ⇒ Do not threaten to blow up or set fire to the clinic
  - ⇒ Do not bring a weapon to the clinic
  - ⇒ Do not hit, grab, grope, kick, punch, or slap anyone at the clinic
- ◆ Follow the clinic's policies and rules to make sure everyone is safe
  - ⇒ Do not pull out your needles

## What happens if I or another patient make a threat to harm others?

A threat can be anything said or done that makes someone else feel scared or intimidated. A threat can be something someone says or does that can lead to harm of staff and other patients. If a patient makes a threat and/or acts on that threat by hurting anyone, the clinic can and may:

- ⇒ call the police
- ⇒ stop taking care of the patient immediately
- ⇒ not allow him or her back into the clinic
- ⇒ request a no trespassing order be issued by the police

## What can I do to work with the clinic to avoid being discharged?

- ◆ Work with the clinic staff, talk about what may be causing the behaviors and how you can respond in a non-disruptive way.
  - ⇒ The social worker may work with you or refer you to counselor, therapist or psychiatrist for an evaluation and/or services.
  - ⇒ If the clinic recommends a referral, make an appointment and follow through.
- ◆ It is ok to get angry, frustrated or to have a grievance about your care, but you must address your concerns in a calm manner.
  - ⇒ If you need some help to calm down, ask to talk with the social worker or clinic manager. You may be able to reschedule your dialysis and return when you are calm.
  - ⇒ Use the clinic grievance process and/or contact the Network if you have concerns about the care you are being provided.
- ◆ The clinic may review the Patients' Rights, Responsibilities and Rules documents with you and may write a behavior and/or care agreement.
  - ⇒ Participate in any meetings the clinic offers. It is your opportunity to help make a plan together.

# 8 Simple Practices to Manage Kidney Disease Stress and Mental Health

Do you ever feel overwhelmed by the constant demands of kidney disease, struggle to stay present, or manage your stress levels? Whether you have kidney disease or care for someone who has it, you're not alone. In 2021, an estimated 57.8 million Americans lived with mental illness, but help is available. If these struggles persist, reach out to a mental health professional and try these simple practices that may transform your life.

So, take a deep breath, let go of your worries, and join us on this journey to a happier, healthier you.

## 1. Learn Mindfulness Techniques

Yoga, deep breathing, and meditation. What do these activities have in common? They are all mindful-based therapies that help ground you in the present and teach you how to accept your thoughts and bodily sensations.

According to the [American Psychological Association](#), these techniques may help:

- Reduce stress, depression, and anxiety
- Manage pain
- Reduce fatigue

Want to give it a try? [Read "Mindfulness and Kidney Disease"](#) for tips from a social worker certified to teach mindfulness-based stress reduction.



## 2. Go Outside

Have you heard of the phrase, "Stop and smell the roses?" There's a reason why the saying has persisted—spending time outside is good for you, and an increasing number of studies backs that up.



One such [study](#) found that time in greenspace may reduce:

- Risk of type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Stress

So, go outside, touch the grass, or open a window and feel the breeze—your brain and body will thank you. If you cannot go outside, consider going on a [virtual National Park tour](#) or listening to nature sounds.

## 3. Surround Yourself with Community

No one can do everything on their own, so don't be afraid to ask others for help and spend time with your community. Need help finding people who can relate to your experiences?

Here are places to connect with other people with kidney disease.

### **NKF Peers**

This free program connects people with late-stage kidney disease, including people on dialysis or those with a kidney transplant, with mentors who have lived well with kidney disease. Hearing from others with the same experience may help you adjust to a new lifestyle and maintain hope.

"I wanted to communicate with my children and Doris, my NKF Peers mentor, shared how she dealt with kidney disease in her family. She helped me find the language to explain it in a way my family would understand," [said Manusca, NKF Peers Mentee](#). "Doris made it easy for me to ask questions and nothing was off limits. She shared her intimate experiences and helped me navigate the uncharted waters."

## 8 Simple Practices to Manage Kidney Disease Stress and Mental Health

### 3. Surround Yourself with Community

#### **NKF Communities**

These online communities are full of people with kidney disease, living kidney donors, potential donors, and care partners who can offer support and guidance.

One user reported during a 2019 survey that the kidney disease community “really had made a big difference to my life, and I also enjoy the chance to be able to encourage and support others.”

Find your community.

#### **Kidney Walk**

Kidney Walks raise money and awareness to fight kidney disease. There you'll meet others who have been touched by kidney disease.

"I couldn't believe how many people were affected by kidney disease. At Kidney Walk, we saw all these children who either had kidney disease or were in a family affected by kidney disease and it really encouraged us. It felt like a community that was there for us," said Jeni Slater, mother of a child with kidney failure. "We've made a lot of connections through the local NKF office. We, the pediatric families touched by kidney disease, get together and support each other."

Walk with us for a better future.



### 4. Unleash Your Inner Artist

There is a reason why art therapy exists. Engaging in creativity can help you open up, share your feelings, and even process emotions. The best part is you don't have to be talented to benefit from it. So get creative and experiment with different artistic mediums to determine what you enjoy.

**Here are some ideas to get you started:**

- Draw or color
- Paint
- Make pottery
- Knit
- Crochet
- Act in a community theater



If you are a perfectionist, consider taking an online or in-person class. You'll learn the craft and surround yourself with others who love it as much as you do.





## 8 Simple Practices to Manage Kidney Disease Stress and Mental Health

### 5. Volunteer

If you're looking for a mental health boost, consider volunteering. [This study](#) found that engaging in altruistic behaviors like donating money or sharing food, especially during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, increased overall life satisfaction and lowered negative emotions like pessimism.

For Precious, becoming a volunteer advocate helped her heal after losing her child and kidney transplant just days apart.

"My success and passion for thriving have come from advocacy. Being engaged with individuals in the kidney community, having that opportunity to share my experience," [said Precious, a home hemodialysis patient.](#) "Not many people can say this, but I think I am better because of all that I went through. I'm now fulfilled because I'm helping people by advocating."

Ready to experience these benefits while finding a community? [Become a Voices for Kidney Health advocate.](#)



### 6. Play With A Pet

Research in animal-human interactions is new but has found that pets may improve many people's mental health. The National Institutes of Health ([NIH](#)) has even launched studies to discover how.

**Their preliminary research found that spending time with animals may:**

- Decrease stress
- Improve heart health
- Increase emotional and social skills

While there are still investigations to determine why and to what degree, these results are promising! So, if you're feeling down, make time to play, cuddle, or watch whatever pet you, your friends, or family have. It may make you feel better.

Don't have a pet? Make an appointment with your local animal shelter where you can help walk dogs or play with cats. You'll get your fill of cute animals with the added benefits of volunteering!



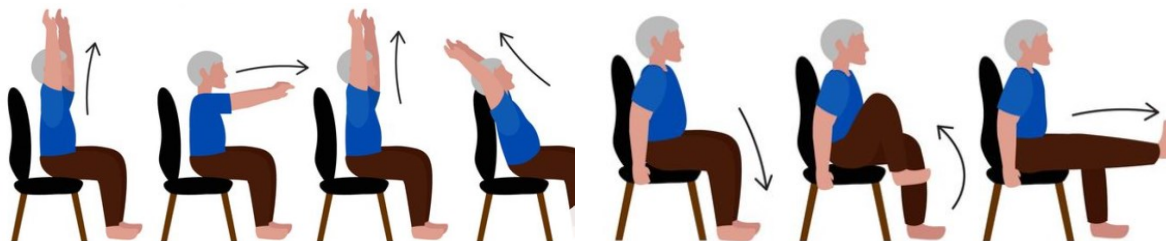
### 7. Exercise

Getting or staying fit could change your life! With benefits ranging from higher levels of energy to [lower levels of cholesterol and triglycerides](#), you won't regret incorporating exercise into your daily activities.

**Other benefits may include the following:**

- Stronger muscles
- Better blood pressure control
- Better sleep
- Control over body weight

Exercise doesn't have to be hard or intense, either. Try simply walking, dancing, or swimming



## 8 Simple Practices to Manage Kidney Disease Stress and Mental Health

### 8. Eat Healthily

Good nutrition that follows dietary guidelines, is key to good mental and physical health. With kidney disease, this may be more difficult since you may need to limit nutrients like phosphorus and potassium, but help is available. Ask your healthcare professional what diet is right for you, and [find a kidney dietitian](#).



#### **Three types of diets:**

**DASH diet:** Full of plant-based foods, low-fat dairy products, fish, poultry, beans, seeds, and nuts. It is low in salt, added sugars, and fat.

**Plant-based diet:** Consists of plant-based foods like vegetables and grains instead of animal-based foods like red meat.

**Carbohydrate counting:** Restricts the number of carbohydrates (sugar) eaten.

## Taking Medications Safely and as Prescribed

There are many reasons to take medications that may include treating diseases like chronic kidney disease, managing medical conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure (hypertension), and relieving symptoms like fever or pain. Medications can be taken differently. Some medications may be swallowed, administered as an injection (a shot), or given through an IV into a vein. Other medications may enter through the eyes or ears as drops, or into the nose using an inhaler. It is important to take medications as prescribed in order to get the best results.



Taking medication safely begins with knowing the names of the medications you are taking, why you are taking them, and how you should take them. Information on the medication bottle should tell you how often to take the medication, for how long, and if the medication should be taken with food, or other important information. You can ask the DCL nurses questions, too, like how long it will take a medication to work, what to do if you miss a dose, and what side effects you should know about with the medications you are taking. Contact your healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) or ask a pharmacist about taking over the counter vitamins or supplements along with medications you have been prescribed.

Other ways to take medications safely include telling your healthcare provider and pharmacist about allergies you have to medications. Do not share your medications with others or take medications prescribed to other people, and always keep medications away from children and pets. Follow the instructions on the medication bottle. It is not safe to take many medications with beer, wine, or hard liquor. Make sure to refill your prescriptions early enough so you do not run out. Order your prescriptions from the same pharmacy so they have a record of the medications you are taking.

It is a good idea to keep a current list of the medications you are taking, including vitamins and supplements. Be sure to make several copies of your medication list. Keep a few copies for yourself. Keep one at home, and one in your purse or wallet, and share one list with your healthcare provider and DCL team. It is important they know about the medications you are taking. Your healthcare team will ask you periodically about the medications you are taking to make sure they have the most up-to-date list.

Be wise about taking medications safely and as prescribed in order to get the best results! Let your healthcare team know if you are having problems taking a medication or if a medication is not working. DCL nurses can work with you with taking your medications safely and help answer your questions.



## Try these to stay cool:

- ◆ Ice Chips



- ◆ Staying in cool areas



- ◆ Loose and light colored clothing



- ◆ Frozen Grapes, Blueberries and Strawberries



- ◆ Wear a Hat



- ◆ Water - NO SODA



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Dialysis Center of Lincoln

### Learn:

Staff and Patient achievements

What the staff is up to

What Dialysis Events are coming up

And much much more!

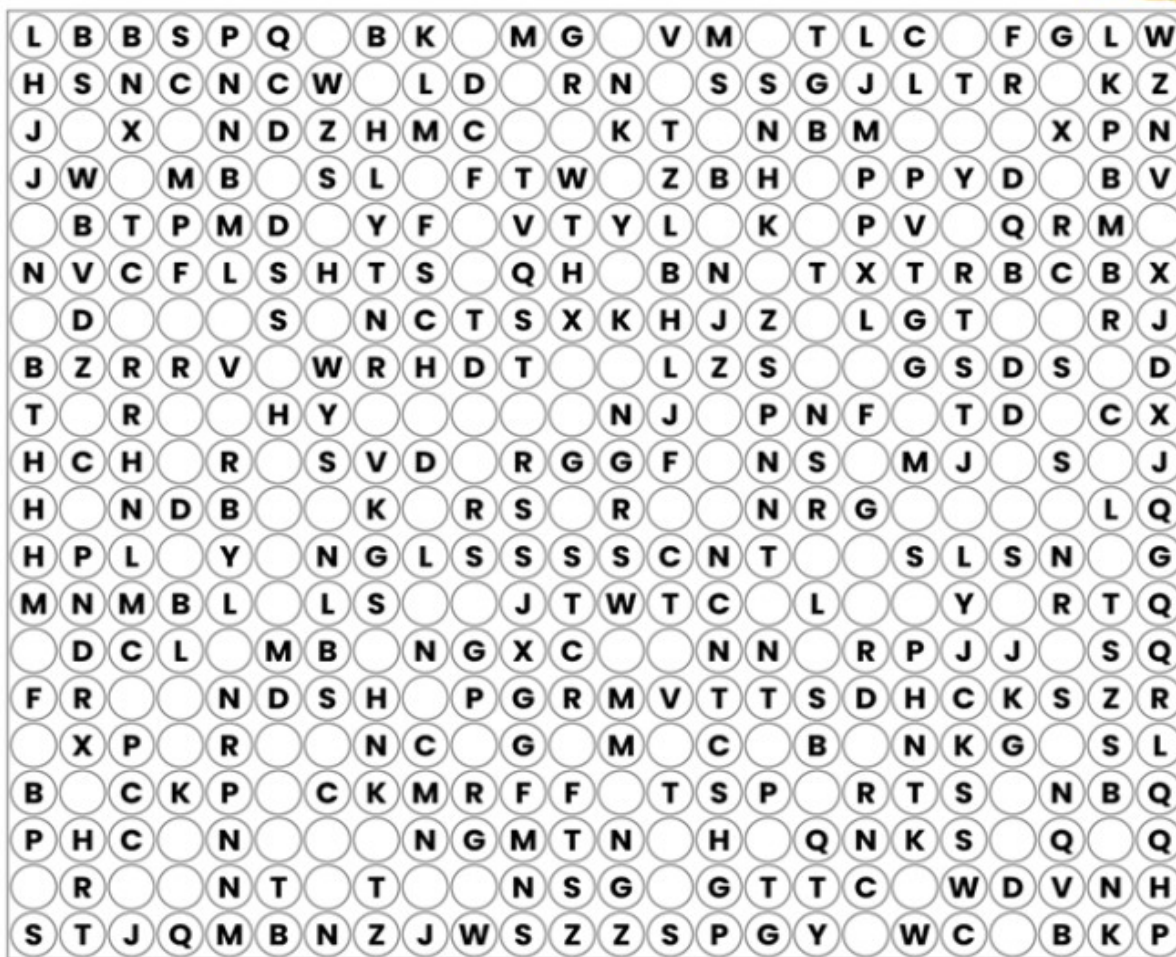






## Summer Camp Missing Vowels Puzzle

Find and circle the words in the list. The vowels are missing in the puzzle.



### ACTIVITIES

ARTS  
AUGUST  
BACKPACK  
BRACELETS  
BUDDIES  
BUNK  
BUS  
CABIN  
CAMPFIRE  
CANOEING



### CHORES

CLIMBING  
CRAFTS  
DAY  
EXERCISE  
EXPERIENCE  
FRIENDSHIP  
FUN  
GAMES  
GROWTH  
GUIDE



### HANDBOOK

HAPPY  
JULY  
JUNE  
KAYAKING  
LAKE  
LIFEGUARD  
ORIENTATION  
OUTDOORS  
PLAYING  
RAIN

### RULES

SCHEDULE  
SPORTS  
STARS  
SUN  
SUNRISE  
SWIMMING  
TEENS  
TENT  
TREK  
WILDERNESS

