



## Stay Healthy, Stay Home Telehealth Toolkit Patient Reference Guide



### What is Telehealth?

Telehealth, telemedicine, or other related terms refer to how healthcare providers and clinicians can provide care for patients remotely when the provider and patient are not able to meet with each other in person. Modern technology allows doctors to care for patients by using video-conferencing tools.

### Who can provide healthcare services through telemedicine?

A range of providers that includes doctors, nurse practitioners, registered dietitians, licensed clinical social workers and mental health providers are able to offer telehealth as long as it's appropriate for you!

### Am I eligible to receive care through telemedicine?

Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries are able to receive a number of approved services via telehealth through new CMS Waivers in place for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many other private insurance programs also have telehealth approved services.

### What equipment will I need?

If you are receiving in-center hemodialysis, you may not require equipment of your own to connect virtually with your dialysis care providers; your facility may help you connect. However, if you dialyze at home or you are trying to schedule an appointment with other non-dialysis providers, you may require some of the items below to receive telehealth:

- Internet connection
- Computer, tablet, laptop, or phone with teleconference capabilities


### What is the “Stay Healthy, Stay Home Telehealth Toolkit”?

A toolkit of educational videos and printable resources which are aimed at assisting in-center and home patients with the use of telemedicine by keeping you connected to your ESRD care team and other important healthcare providers, while limiting your physical exposure to others who may be sick.

### What's included in the “Stay Healthy, Stay Home Telehealth Toolkit”?



The following **clickable**, **viewable** and **printable** resources will assist ESRD patients with understanding the use and benefits of telemedicine and the importance of considering home therapy treatment options that can help you stay safe and healthy.

## 5 Things to Know About Telemedicine



Donate

### 5 Things to Know About Telemedicine

You may have recently heard of the term telemedicine. So what is telemedicine? It's more than just a buzzword or a word to describe using FaceTime or Skype with your doctor. Telemedicine is the use of technology to connect patients with physicians or other health care providers outside of the traditional office visit. National Kidney Foundation President Jeffrey S. Berns, MD, breaks down what telemedicine means and how it can be used for people with kidney disease.

Telemedicine is defined as exchanging medical information between different sites. This means that instead of being treated in the same room, a patient can be located in a different city, or even country, from a doctor or other health care provider. The telemedicine appointment is conducted through electronic communications to provide diagnoses, treatment recommendations and health care education to improve patients' health status. Here are 5 key details you should know about telemedicine:


1. Telemedicine "visits" are typically conducted using special internet technology to transmit voice, images (including the patient and doctor), and sound. There is even a digital stethoscope and other tools available that can be used to transmit heart and lung sounds from the patient to the provider.
2. For patients with kidney disease, telemedicine has been used to monitor blood pressures measured at home and has been shown to improve control of BP. Telemedicine has also been used successfully to provide resources and information to patients. For example, this information sharing could include providing information about how to best reduce dietary salt intake and how to take high blood pressure medications correctly.
3. Another use of telemedicine is to help connect two doctors together. For instance, an internist, family doctor, or nurse practitioner could talk with a nephrologist to discuss a patient and coordinate care. This model has been used very successfully in

<https://www.kidney.org/content5-things-know-about-telemedicine>

### A few Key Details:

- Telemedicine "visits" are typically conducted using special internet technology to transmit voice, images (including the patient and doctor), and sound.
- For patients with kidney disease, telemedicine has been used to monitor blood pressures measured at home and has been shown to improve control of BP.
- Telemedicine has also been used successfully to provide resources and information to patients.

## Getting the Most out of your Telemedicine Visit



### Getting the Most out of your Telemedicine Visit

Telemedicine allows you to see your health care professional using your computer, tablet, or phone. Telemedicine visits are also called "telehealth," "remote," or "virtual" visits. Your healthcare team may have even contacted you about doing your next visit like this.

Check with your healthcare team to see if they offer these types of appointments. Many insurance plans cover telemedicine, including Medicare. Be sure to ask your health insurance company if your policy covers telemedicine visits. This worksheet can help you prepare for your next telemedicine visit, so you can get the most out of your appointment. You can also write down any recommendations from your doctor or other healthcare professional.

Date and time of your next telemedicine visit:  
Name of doctor (or other healthcare professional):  
Reason for your telemedicine visit:

Questions you may want to ask during your visit:

1. Symptoms or problems you wish to talk about:
2. Questions about your treatment you wish to discuss:
3. Questions about any medicines or supplements:
4. Other questions or concerns you might have:

Use the space below to jot down any ideas or recommendations made by your healthcare professional:

5. Changes in your treatment (medicines, eating or lifestyle):
6. Lab work or other follow-up (if required):
7. Date/time of next appointment (if required):

### Telemedicine Visit at a Glance:

- This worksheet can help you prepare for a telemedicine visit, so you can get the most out of your appointment.
- You can also write down any recommendations from your doctor or other healthcare professional.

## ESRD Network Program – The Benefits of Telehealth



### The Benefits of Telehealth

A safe and effective way to access healthcare during the coronavirus pandemic.

**What is telehealth?**  
Telehealth, telemedicine, or other related terms refer to how healthcare providers and clinicians can provide care for patients remotely when the provider and patient are not able to meet with each other in person. Modern technology allows doctors to care for patients by using video-conferencing tools.

**Why is it important to consider telehealth as a way to help stop the spread of COVID-19?**  
The rapid spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has created an urgency to expand the use of technology to help people who have chronic illnesses and need routine care get access to their healthcare providers. Telehealth can keep you connected to your ESRD care team and other important healthcare providers, while limiting your physical exposure to other patients and clinical staff. It gives you access to your healthcare team from the safety and comfort of your home, reduces transportation challenges, and limits your risk of exposure to COVID-19.

**Who can provide you with healthcare services through telemedicine?**  
A range of providers that includes doctors, nurse practitioners, registered dietitians, licensed clinical social workers and mental health providers are able to offer telehealth as long as it's appropriate for you!

**Am I eligible to receive care through telemedicine?**  
Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries are able to receive a number of approved services via telehealth through new CMS Waivers in place for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many other private insurance programs also have telehealth approved services. To verify if your health insurance covers services through telehealth, call the number on the back of your insurance card or talk with your healthcare team.



**What are some of the services I may receive?**  
Below is a list of services that your health insurance may cover. For information about specific services, please consult with your insurance company.

**In-Center Hemodialysis**

- You may receive a virtual visit from your kidney doctor or other healthcare providers while you are receiving your dialysis treatment at your facility. You may also be asked to participate in a virtual plan-of-care meeting. In these cases, your facility might provide the technology needed, such as a computer or device that will allow you to have a virtual, live conversation with your healthcare provider.

**Home Hemodialysis or Peritoneal Dialysis**


- If you dialyze at home, you may be asked to attend a virtual visit with your kidney doctor or other care providers.

**Kidney Transplant**

- Some transplant centers are continuing kidney transplant evaluations through virtual appointments. Connect with your center to talk about what virtual options are available.

**General Care**

- You can request a virtual visit with your primary care provider or other specialists.




**What equipment will I need?**  
If you are receiving in-center hemodialysis, you may not require equipment of your own to connect virtually with your dialysis care providers; your facility might help you connect. However, if you dialyze at home or you are trying to schedule an appointment with other non-dialysis providers, you may require some items from the list below to receive telehealth:

- Internet connection
- Computer, tablet, laptop, or phone with teleconference capabilities

**Will I need to install applications?**

- You may need to install applications on your device that will allow video or teleconference functions
- Some free applications that are being used during the COVID-19 pandemic include:


- Skype <https://www.skype.com/en/>
- Google Meetings <https://meet.google.com/>
- WhatsApp <https://www.whatsapp.com/>
- FaceTime <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/faceetime>
- Amwell <https://amwell.com/en/>



**To file a grievance, please contact us:**  
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## ESRD Network Program – Patient Telehealth Visit Checklist



### Home Dialysis Patient Telehealth Visit Checklist


Important Topics to Cover During Your Monthly Clinic Visit Through Telehealth


**Did you know?**  
Once you have successfully dialyzed in your home for three months you may decide to use telehealth for two out of every three clinic visits with your dialysis team.

**Choosing to Use Telehealth for Home Dialysis.**  
The telehealth visit will include all members of the dialysis team including your doctor, nurse, social worker and dietitian to provide you with a complete monthly clinic visit without leaving your home. If you are unsure how to have a visit with your dialysis team using telehealth, ask your facility manager or social worker for educational resources or assistance.

**Be Prepared! Prior to the visit, collect this information to share with the home dialysis team**

- Take and record current vital signs including your weight, blood pressure, pulse, and temperature.
  - Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Blood Pressure: \_\_\_\_\_ Pulse: \_\_\_\_\_ Temperature: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Are there changes in your vital signs from your normal baseline now or during your treatment? Highlight any changes on your flow sheets.
- Identify any changes concerning your wellbeing and write them down, examples include sleep issues, changes in bowel habits, mental health concerns/ability to cope, or change in appetite, etc.
- Review your flow sheets and make a list of questions about your treatment that you want to discuss. Make sure you have access to your monthly electronic flow sheet records or paper copies.
- Your doctor may want to review the following items with you:
  - Number of treatments completed/week
  - Dialysis prescription
  - PO only fill / drain volumes, % dextrose used, dwell times, and number of exchanges
  - Your vital signs before and after treatments
  - Symptoms during therapy
  - Alarms and your response to them
  - Dry weight assessment
  - Lab results
- Do you need any support handling
  - Machine problems
  - Supply issues
  - Your home set up
  - Dietary concerns
  - Insurance, transportation, financial, or social support issues
- Be prepared to show your dialysis team your access or catheter site using the camera on your device, such as a smartphone, tablet, or laptop (this may require a care partner to help with the camera.)
  - If you cannot do this, you could use a cell phone to take pictures and forward them to the team for review.





**Basic tips to help you make the most of your Telehealth Visit**

- If possible ask someone to sit with you during the visit to act as a telehealth partner. This person could help you manage the technology (equipment, camera) and also help you take notes.
- Log on to your device 10-15 minutes before your visit so you can set up your connection and test calling in. This will help ensure that any technical issues you might have are handled before your dialysis team is ready to begin the visit.
- Make sure that you can clearly hear the members of your dialysis team and that they can also hear you through the phone or computer.
- Let the team know how you are feeling about your treatment plan and about your overall wellbeing.
- Make sure you have a list of your current medications available throughout the visit, and ask for prescription refills as needed. When possible, have medicines delivered to your home and keep an available supply on hand in case of an emergency.
- If you are a diabetic, have blood sugar records available for discussion.
- Let your doctor know of any changes in appetite or bowel movements.
- Discuss any changes to your dialysis access including pain, swelling, discoloration, discomfort or problems with adequate flow.
- Identify any challenges with your diet, finances, mental health or need for social support.
- Discuss alternative treatment options (for example, home hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, or transplant, and other specialists).
- Ask for referrals if you need to see other clinicians (for example, for your vascular access, kidney transplant evaluation, and other specialists).
- If you are currently being evaluated for a transplant discuss the status of your work up/evaluation.
- Speak up:** Let the team know about any symptoms you are having that are out of the ordinary for you!
- Have a pad and pen handy to allow you to jot down notes and document changes to your treatment routine.

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## ESRD Network Program – Do you know your home treatment options?


### Do you know your home treatment options?

#### HOME DIALYSIS...


Peritoneal Dialysis (PD)	Home Hemodialysis (HHD)
<b>PD Benefits in Brief</b> <b>Needle-free.</b> A catheter is used for treatments. <b>Portable.</b> Take it with you. <b>Flexible.</b> Choose treatment times that fit your needs and lifestyle. <b>Freedom.</b> Eat and drink more of what you like. <b>Kidney Function.</b> PD may help you keep your remaining kidney function longer than standard hemodialysis.	<b>HHD Benefits in Brief</b> <b>More Energy.</b> Get more dialysis and feel better. <b>More Control.</b> Eat, drink, and have visitors during treatments. <b>Better Access.</b> Lasts longest when you put in your own needles. <b>Better Survival.</b> You may live just as long as if you received a deceased donor kidney transplant.

**What type of support would be provided by the dialysis facility?**

- A home nurse will provide one-on-one training until you are comfortable to dialyze at home.
- Your clinic will be available to you 24/7, either in the facility or by phone.
- You will make visits to the home facility for lab tests and evaluations.
- The home nurse will assist in organizing your home with supplies needed for dialysis treatments.



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End-Stage Renal Disease  
Network of New England

<http://network1.esrd.ipro.org>

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### Home Dialysis Treatment Options:

- This resource will assist patients with learning about home treatment options, the benefits of home dialysis, available support and why you should consider this treatment option for renal replacement therapy.
- With the ongoing health crisis, it's important to know all of your treatment options as patients are safer receiving treatments at home away from other patients or staff who may be sick.

## ESRD Network Program – Peritoneal Dialysis (PD): The Needle-Free Option Brochure

### Considering PD?


Here are some concerns you might have about PD that would be worth discussing with your healthcare team:

- I'm not sure there's a place to do PD exchanges at my workplace.
- I'm worried I might do something wrong and get an infection.
- I don't want to always have a belly full of fluid.
- I wonder if it would be hard to sleep with a cycler going at night.

**Comments from people on PD...**

"On PD, I could travel much easier. I love road trips and I would keep a tote with supplies (cups, sanitizer, a hook for over a door, etc.) ready to go. Throw in some fluid and off you go!"

"I think PD is one of the best options for dialysis. I felt much better on PD than Hemo. I love the freedom of living each day without having to go to the clinic three days a week."




Available on the App Store and on Google Play...

**Kidney Choices**  
A tool to help you and your healthcare team select the treatment option that is right for you.  
Track diagnostic tests, clinician appointments and medications.

For more information or to file a grievance, please contact us:  
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### Do you know all of your treatment options?

Transplant...  
In-center Dialysis...  
Home Dialysis...

**Peritoneal Dialysis (PD)  
The Needle-Free Option**



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(866) 286-ESRD (3773)  
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### Home Dialysis Option: PD

In this educational brochure you will have a more in-depth overview of Peritoneal Dialysis, important things to consider and how to get the conversation started with your healthcare team.



## ESRD Network Program – Home Hemodialysis (HHD) Brochure


**Tips for considering a Home Modality**

- Research your many options.
- Think about your long-term goals.
- Involve your care partner in the planning process.
- Consider where you can place home dialysis equipment and supplies in your living space.
- Ask to speak with a patient who is dialyzing at home.
- Discuss any questions you may have with your healthcare team.
- Form a partnership with your care team.

**Comments from people on HHD...**

"I was one of the first in Hawaii to get trained for Home HD, and have been a big fan ever since! I really like how portable my machine is."

"I don't feel like a 'sick person' anymore. I'm proud to tell people that I do my own treatments at home!"



Available on the App Store and on Google Play...

**Kidney Choices**

A tool to help you and your healthcare team select the treatment option that is right for you.

Track diagnostic tests, clinician appointments and medications.

For more information or to file a grievance, please contact us:

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End-Stage Renal Disease Network of New England

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**Do you know all of your treatment options?**

Transplant...  
In-center Dialysis...  
Peritoneal Dialysis...

**Home Hemodialysis (HHD)**





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### Home Dialysis Option: HHD

In this educational brochure you will have a more in-depth overview of the different types of Home Hemodialysis options, important things to consider and how to get the conversation started with your healthcare team.

## ESRD NCC – Kidney Patient Care: Your Guide to Using Telemedicine




**Kidney Patient Care: Your Guide to Using Telemedicine**

**What is telemedicine?**

Telemedicine simply means having a medical appointment in another way—not in person.

You can have a telemedicine visit with your healthcare team by phone or by using virtual technology. Technology connects you with your healthcare team by using a:

It makes it possible for your doctors or other healthcare professionals, to have a medical visit with you no matter where you are.

**Why are people talking about telemedicine now?**

Because of Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) changed the rules on telemedicine. They made it easier for patients to get care in a new way—from home. This means that everyone, especially people at higher risk, can see their doctors and stay healthy. And it means less risk of getting, or spreading, the COVID-19 virus. Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance will pay for many different types of telemedicine care. You can see doctors, nurse practitioners, psychologists, and licensed clinical social workers with telemedicine.

Telemedicine may also be called telehealth. There are slight differences in these two words, but they mean similar things. Telemedicine is when a healthcare worker gives medical care or education from a remote location. The technology used to deliver the medical service to patients is referred to as telehealth. In this guide, we will use the word telemedicine.

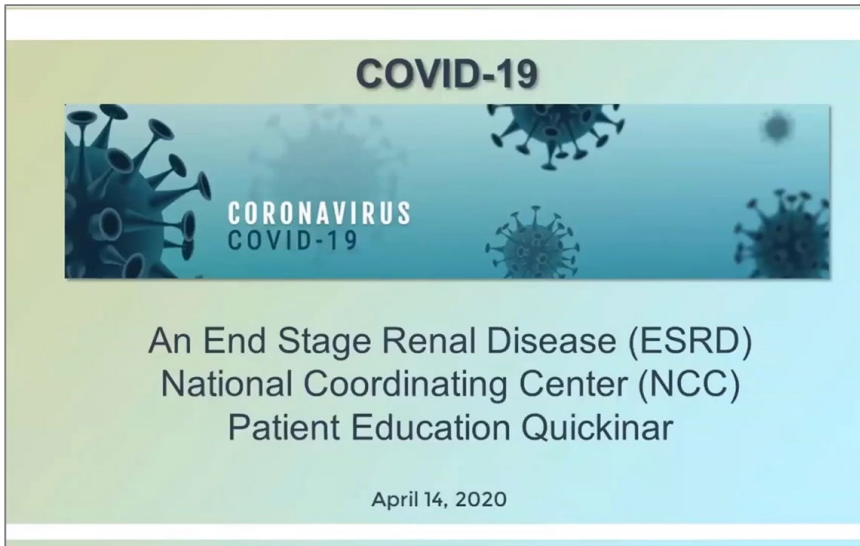
### Telehealth at a Glance:

- Telemedicine allows you to talk to your healthcare team on your cellular phone, tablet or home computer with a camera.
- With telehealth, you can visit your healthcare team without leaving your home.
- Benefits: Simple to Use, No Travel
- Sample Questions You Can Ask Your Doctor During a Telemedicine Visit

## Stay Healthy, Stay Home Telehealth Toolkit Patient Reference Guide



### ESRD NCC Patient Education Quickinar: Using Telehealth to Visit Your Doctor

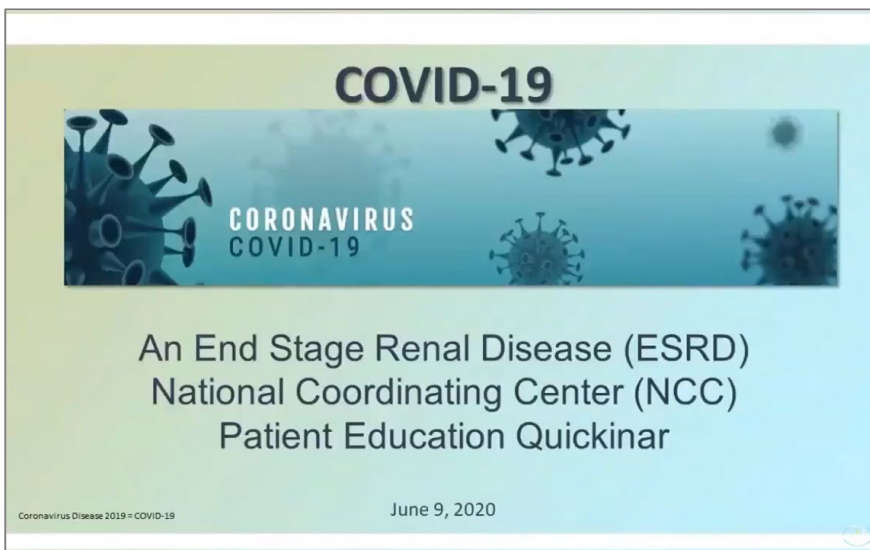


#### **Presentation Objectives:**

Learn the benefits of in-center hemodialysis and home dialysis during the COVID-19 environment.

Learn methods for using telemedicine with home dialysis treatments.

### ESRD NCC Patient Education Quickinar: Considering Home Dialysis During a COVID-19 Environment



#### **Presentation Objectives:**

Identify who could potentially benefit from telehealth technology.

Learn about ways that telehealth can limit patient exposure to COVID-19.



## Stay Healthy, Stay Home Telehealth Toolkit Patient Reference Guide



### How Do I Use These Resources?

Review the Stay Healthy, Stay Home Telehealth resources in this toolkit and learn about the potential benefits of using telemedicine to schedule routine medical visits with your healthcare providers.

1. Educate yourself and share these resources with fellow peers at your facility about the benefits of telemedicine and home treatment options that will empower them to be involved in the decision-making process about their health.
2. Ask a member of the healthcare team to print the stay Healthy, Stay Home Telehealth Toolkit resources so they can be shared with patients and/or family member/caregivers at your facility.
3. Answer questions that you are able to, but do not give medical advice. Always refer your peers to a member of the healthcare team for questions and/or further evaluation for home dialysis or telemedicine utilization.

### If I need assistance with the Stay Healthy, Stay Home Telehealth Toolkit, who do I contact?

Contact your ESRD Network for additional information and resources.

#### **IPRO End-Stage Renal Disease Network of New England**

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