



Vaccinating Dialysis Patients and Healthcare Personnel

Take action to protect patients at high-risk in your jurisdiction

COVID-19 vaccines are effective at protecting people from getting sick. By allocating vaccines for outpatient dialysis patients and the healthcare personnel who care for them in your jurisdiction, you can protect patients who are at high risk, disproportionately affected by COVID-19, or might suffer severe consequences if infected.

How can jurisdictions support COVID-19 vaccination efforts for dialysis patients and healthcare personnel?

- Make sure you are aware of the dialysis clinics located in your jurisdiction.
- Reach out to dialysis clinics where you do not have an established contact. Some of your local dialysis centers might be operated by corporate chains. For these centers, jurisdictions can opt to coordinate with national or regional corporate leaders to reach their respective clinic sites.
- Work collaboratively with dialysis clinics to understand their needs, priorities, and barriers to vaccination among patients and healthcare personnel.
- Make sure each dialysis clinic in your jurisdiction is enrolled as a COVID-19 vaccination provider.
- Work with dialysis clinic leaders to establish the number of doses needed to vaccinate patients and healthcare personnel and determine a timeline for allocating these doses.

Why is it important to vaccinate dialysis patients?

- The median age of patients on dialysis is 62 years. Due to age and health status, dialysis patients are at high risk for serious illness and death related to COVID-19; people on dialysis who get COVID-19 have a 50% hospitalization rate and a 20%–30% mortality rate.
- Vaccinating this population addresses a health equity issue. Chronic kidney disease disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minorities; 34% of patients on dialysis are Black and 19% are Hispanic. Many dialysis clinics deliver care to patients in communities that have been hit hardest by this pandemic.
- Dialysis is a lifesaving, essential treatment that must be done 3 times per week for most patients. Because these services are nonelective and cannot be delayed, dialysis clinics serve patients whether they have COVID-19 or not. This creates a high-risk environment for other dialysis patients and healthcare personnel and underscores the importance of vaccination to protect everyone in these clinics.



www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines

Why vaccinate patients while they are at the dialysis clinic?

- Dialysis patients can be easily reached for COVID-19 vaccination at dialysis clinics, which have extensive operational, logistical, and IT infrastructure to serve as capable vaccine providers.
- Many dialysis patients are accustomed to receiving routine vaccinations at the dialysis clinic. By offering COVID-19 vaccines in a setting where patients are comfortable with trusted and trained vaccinators, it might be possible to increase vaccination rates for this high-risk population and ensure patients receive a complete vaccination series.
- Patients on dialysis are often medically frail, and it might be challenging and impractical for them to seek out venues separate from the dialysis clinic to receive COVID-19 vaccines.
- Currently, dialysis providers are reporting low COVID-19 vaccination coverage among their patients because of challenges with getting vaccines.

Why is it important to vaccinate dialysis healthcare personnel?

- Dialysis healthcare personnel are considered a priority population for vaccination by the [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](#).
- Dialysis providers are currently reporting low COVID-19 vaccination coverage among their healthcare personnel because of challenges with obtaining vaccines.
 - Healthcare personnel working at outpatient dialysis clinics might have difficulty accessing vaccine because most dialysis clinics are not affiliated with hospitals. The convenience of having vaccine offered at their workplace might improve vaccination coverage.
 - Dialysis healthcare personnel might have high-risk, work-related exposures to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, because their work involves being in close proximity (<6 feet) to their patients for extended periods of time.
 - Ensuring healthcare personnel have access to COVID-19 vaccination is critical to protect both them and their medically fragile patients.



Visit [CDC's Vaccinating Dialysis Patients and Healthcare Personnel page](#) for more information on protecting patients at high-risk for COVID-19 in your jurisdiction.