



# New ESRD Patient Orientation Packet (NEPOP)

## Resources to Help You Live Well with Kidney Failure

### Understanding End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD)

If you have end-stage renal disease (ESRD), you may have questions about dialysis, transplant, Medicare coverage, costs, prescriptions, emergency dialysis, travel, and where to get help. Resources from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) can help you understand your options and talk with your care team about what is right for you.

### Understanding Kidney Failure

A good place for newly diagnosed patients to start is to learn more about kidney disease.

[The American Association of Kidney Patients \(AAKP\)](#) offers a number of helpful guides to help you better understand and manage kidney disease.

### The 2728 Form, Medicare, and Your Coverage

The [2728 Form](#) is an important Medicare form for people with end-stage renal disease (ESRD). It confirms that you have ESRD and may be eligible for Medicare coverage for dialysis or kidney transplant care. Your dialysis facility care team will help you complete the form, and your kidney doctor will sign it to confirm your diagnosis. You will also be asked to sign the form. Signing the 2728 Form does not cancel any other health insurance you may have. Medicare may work alongside your other insurance. You have the right to ask questions before signing. You also have the right to refuse to sign, but if the form is not signed and submitted, Medicare coverage may be delayed. If you are unsure what the form means for you, ask your social worker, care team, or insurance counselor to explain it in a way that is clear to you.

## Getting Help with Costs and Insurance

Kidney care can be expensive, but help may be available for dialysis-related costs, medications, transportation, insurance premiums, transplant expenses, and emergencies.

### Helpful places to start:

- [American Kidney Fund](#) financial assistance programs
- [National Kidney Foundation](#) insurance and prescription assistance resources
- [Social Security Disability and Medicare](#) information
- [211](#) for local help with food, housing, transportation, utilities, and health care needs
- [Medicare](#) answers question about insurance coverage

If you are not sure where to begin, ask your dialysis facility social worker or care team for help reviewing your options.



## Vocational Rehabilitation

If you would like to keep working, vocational rehabilitation can help you return to work or explore a new type of job. These services may include counseling, career planning, training, job placement, and support with workplace needs. If you receive Social Security disability benefits, the Ticket to Work program may connect you with free employment services through an Employment Network or your state vocational rehabilitation agency. Working may help you stay active, feel more independent, and improve your quality of life. If you are interested or unsure where to start, ask your social worker about how you can be referred to your local vocational rehabilitation agency.

For information about the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Program, visit <https://choosework.ssa.gov>

For questions or guidance specific to your situation, please call the Ticket to Work Help Line at **1-866-968-7842 / 866-833-2967** (TTY)

**Monday through Friday  
from 8 am— 8 pm ET.**

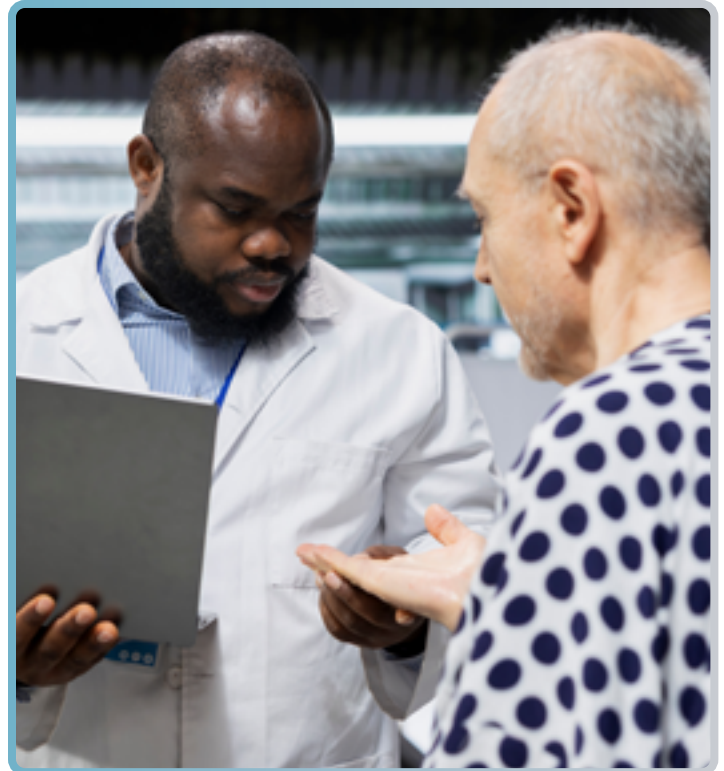
For general inquiries, please e-mail [support@choosework.ssa.gov](mailto:support@choosework.ssa.gov).



## Knowing Your Rights and How to Get Help

You have the right to be treated with respect, understand your care, ask questions, take part in decisions, and share concerns if something does not feel right. Learn more about your rights:

- [Patient Rights and Responsibilities](#)  
[English/Espanol](#)
- [Dialysis Patient Grievance Toolkit](#)  
[English/Espanol](#)
- [Your ESRD Network for questions or concerns about care](#)



## Learn About Your Treatment Options

There is more than one way to treat kidney disease. Your best option depends on your health, lifestyle, support system, goals, and what matters most to you.

Treatment options may include:

- [Home dialysis](#)
- [In-center hemodialysis](#)
- [Transplant](#)

Learn more about your options for vascular access with these resources:

- [Hemodialysis Access](#)
- [Peritoneal Dialysis Catheter](#)

## Preparing for Storms, Power Outages, and Emergencies

Storms, power outages, transportation problems, or other emergencies can interrupt dialysis and access to medications, water, food, and communication. Planning ahead can help you stay safer.

### Helpful steps include:

- Keep emergency contacts for your dialysis facility, care team, family, transportation provider, and ESRD Network.
- Ask your facility what to do if you cannot get to dialysis or your treatment schedule changes.
- Prepare a dialysis go-bag with important papers, medicines, supplies, snacks, and contact information.
- Learn about an emergency diet plan.
- Use [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) resources for help managing power outages, storms, and family communication plans.
- Ask about disaster relief resources if your community is affected



## Eating Well and Staying as Healthy as Possible

Kidney-friendly eating may include limiting the amount of sodium, potassium, phosphorus, protein, and fluids in your diet. Your needs may change based on your treatment, laboratory results, and other health conditions.

Helpful resources may include

[The National Kidney Foundation](https://www.kidney.org), which offers nutrition information on topics such as:

- Kidney-friendly recipes and meal planning tools
- Guidance from a renal dietitian
- Tips for managing fluids, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, and protein
- Safe physical activity, medication safety, smoking cessation, and healthy living resources

Talk with your renal dietitian or care team before making major diet changes.

## Finding Support for You, Your Family, and Caregivers

Kidney disease can affect your daily life, family, work, transportation, emotions, and routines. Support is available for you, your family, and anyone helping with your care.

### Helpful resources may include:

- [Renal Support Network](https://www.kidney.org/health/education/renal-support-network)
- [American Association of Kidney Patients](https://www.aakp.org/)
- [National Kidney Foundation communities](https://www.kidney.org/health/education/nkf-communities), peer support, and [NKF Cares helpline](https://www.kidney.org/health/education/nkf-cares)
- [Family Caregiver Alliance](https://www.familycaregiveralliance.org/)

Ask your social worker or care team about local support groups, peer mentoring, caregiver education, transportation help, and community resources.



## Caring for Your Emotional Well-Being

After a diagnosis of kidney disease, it is normal to feel worry, sadness, anger, stress, or uncertainty. It is important to remember that you do not have to handle everything by yourself.

### Ways to get support include:

- Talk with your dialysis social worker or care team.
- Ask about counseling, behavioral health, or community mental health resources.
- Connect with peer support through kidney patient organizations.
- Include trusted family members or caregivers in care conversations, if you choose.
- Ask for help if stress, sadness, or anxiety is affecting daily life.

If you ever feel unsafe or in crisis, call emergency services or dial 988 for the national Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

## Start Here: Key Resources to Ask About

If you are newly diagnosed or looking for help, start by asking your care team, social worker, dietitian, or ESRD Network about:

1. Medicare and CMS information about ESRD coverage, dialysis, transplant, prescriptions, travel, and complaints
2. Patient Rights and Responsibilities information
3. Treatment choice resources for home dialysis, in-center hemodialysis, transplant, and other care options
4. Dialysis emergency preparedness tools
5. Financial assistance resources
6. Kidney-friendly nutrition and healthy living resources
7. Family and caregiver support resources
8. Emotional wellness and peer support resources

Bring your questions to your care team; they can help you find the resources that fit your needs.

**For more information, please contact KHARES at 866-391-4682**



### Kidney Health Analytics and Emergency Responsive Support

Corporate Office: 300 Jericho Quadrangle, Ste. 300, Jericho, NY 11753

KHARES Emergency Hotline: 866-446-3507

Email: [KHARES@ipro.org](mailto:KHARES@ipro.org)

Website: <https://esrd.ipro.org/quality-improvement/khares/>