

Be Heard

Tips for Talking with Your Care Team

This tool has been developed by kidney patients from the ESRD NPFE-LAN*—Legacy Communications Team. It offers ideas for how to best talk to and build a relationship with your doctors, nurses, dialysis technicians, dietitian, and social worker.



Ask questions. If you have concerns or you do not understand something that is said, ask questions. If the information is still not clear, ask again in a different way.



Make sure you understand. When talking with your healthcare team, repeat back what you have heard in plain language. For example, you can say, “So, what I have heard you say is ...”



Get smart. Learn as much as you can about ESRD, dialysis, and your treatment options. Your healthcare team is a good source of information. They can also help you find useful resources.



Share your story. Tell your healthcare team about your interests, hobbies, and lifestyle. Understanding who you are will help you and your care providers make a plan of care (POC) that supports all of your healthcare needs.



Stay safe. Make sure that all members of the healthcare team wear gloves, wash their hands, or use hand sanitizer, before caring for you.



Be informed. Know what medications you take and why you take them. Keep an updated list handy. Request a copy of your lab results. Also share a copy of your medical records from all hospitalizations with your doctor and facility.



Ask for help. Reach out to family, friends, or your caregiver. Invite them to your appointments. Encourage your care partners also to ask questions.



Connect with others. Talk to other kidney patients. Find out if your facility has a peer mentoring program. Join a support group.



Become involved. Attend your POC meeting. Work with your healthcare team to decide on the best treatment for you.

For more information about your care, ask:

1.

What is the main problem?

2.

How can this be treated?

3.

Why is this important for me?



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