



## In-Center Hemodialysis Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems® (ICH-CAHPS®)

Twice a year, dialysis patients get a survey that asks them how they feel about their dialysis clinic. This survey is their chance to tell the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) what they think about the care they receive at dialysis.

### Survey Facts

1. Most dialysis clinics must have patients surveyed.
2. The surveys are sent by an outside company, not the dialysis clinic.
3. Dialysis workers cannot help answer the questions because they are not allowed to know who gets the survey.
4. Survey questions focus on how dialysis patients feel about their time with their kidney doctor, the dialysis workers, and how clean their clinic feels to them.



The ICH-CAHPS surveys are sent twice a year by mail to each dialysis patient’s home. Please do not throw the survey away! The survey company may also call dialysis patients on the phone. Because they do not work for any dialysis clinic, they can help dialysis patients answer the survey questions.

### Your Answers Matter!

Your answers tell CMS how your dialysis clinic is doing, and CMS uses your answers to help determine the clinic’s CMS rating. If you need help with the questions, you can contact [ichcahps@rti.org](mailto:ichcahps@rti.org) or call 1.866.245.8083.

### Fall 2020 Survey Dates

Pre-notification letters mailed	October 16, 2020	Second survey mailed	December 2, 2020
First survey mailed	October 30, 2020	Survey ends	January 8, 2021

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## Pain Management for Dialysis Patients

If you have been on dialysis, you know what it is like to have pain. How you deal with that pain is important to your overall health. Given all the problems that come from overusing opioids, it is more important than ever to talk about them.

### What Are Opioids?

Opioids are medicines prescribed by your doctor that can help with pain. Some common ones you might know are Vicodin (hydrocodone), OxyContin (oxycodone), morphine, and methadone. They are often given to help with pain after a surgery or from certain cancers or back issues.

### What You Can Do If You Are Prescribed an Opioid and How You Can Avoid Opioid-Related Problems:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that if you are prescribed an opioid by your doctor, start with the lowest dose you can and take them for as little time as you have to. The risk of addiction to and overdose from opioids is real. The CDC also recommends that you try other types pain relief:

- Medicines such as Tylenol® (acetaminophen) or Advil® (ibuprofen) (Be sure to check with your doctor before taking any store-bought medicine.)
- Counseling to learn how you can control your pain yourself
- Physical therapy
- Medications for depression and seizures
- Injections
- Exercise and weight loss
- Other therapies, such as acupuncture and massage

You can visit <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/patients/index.html> to find additional information on opioids. If you or someone you know needs help with opioid misuse or addiction, talk with your doctor or call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) national helpline at 1.800.662.HELP, or go to <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>.

## Medicare Part D Open Enrollment

Not clear on what to do about Medicare Open Enrollment and Medicare Part D (Drug) coverage? Here are some frequently asked questions—and their answers—to help you get started.

### What Is Medicare Part D?

Medicare Part D is the part of Medicare that helps pay for your medications.

### Is Part D Free?

Not usually. In 2020, the average cost of Medicare Part D was \$41 per month.

### When Can I Apply for Part D?

You can apply when you are first eligible for Medicare or during open enrollment: October 15–December 7, 2020.

### How Much Will My Medications Cost?

That depends on which Part D plan you choose.

### How Can I Choose the Best Part D Plan for Me?

Go to the Medicare Plan finder website at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). or call 1.800.MEDICARE (1.800.633.4227).

### Do I Have to Apply for Part D?

Yes and no. Part D is an optional coverage, but if you want it, you do have to apply. If you have drug coverage through another insurance plan, you do not have to apply for Part D and can apply later without penalty. If you do not have drug coverage through another company and do not apply for Part D as soon as you are eligible, a late enrollment penalty may apply.

### Who Can I Go to for Questions?

Your dialysis social worker or insurance counselor may be able to answer some of your questions about Part D. However, they are not allowed to choose a plan for you.

Sources: Ochalla B. Everything to Know About Medicare Open Enrollment. QuoteWizard.com. Available at <https://quotewizard.com/health-insurance/medicare-open-enrollment>; Q1Medicare.com. PDP-Facts: 2020 Medicare Part D Plan facts: Region (State) and National. Available at <https://q1medicare.com/PartD-2020MedicarePartD-PlanStatistics.php>. Accessed on Sept. 17, 2020.

If you have questions about how to voice a concern or grievance, check out this helpful tool created BY patients FOR patients: [www.esrdnetworks.org/resources/toolkits/patient-toolkits/dialysis-patient-grievance-toolkit-1](http://www.esrdnetworks.org/resources/toolkits/patient-toolkits/dialysis-patient-grievance-toolkit-1). To file a grievance, please contact your network below:

#### Network 7: Florida

T: 800.826.3773  
E: [NW7info@hsag.com](mailto:NW7info@hsag.com)  
[www.hsag.com/ESRDNetwork7](http://www.hsag.com/ESRDNetwork7)  
3000 Bayport Dr., Suite 300  
Tampa, FL 33607

#### Network 13: Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma

T: 800.472.8664  
E: [NW13info@hsag.com](mailto:NW13info@hsag.com)  
[www.hsag.com/ESRDNetwork13](http://www.hsag.com/ESRDNetwork13)  
4200 Perimeter Center Dr., Suite 102  
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

#### Network 15: Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming

T: 800.783.8818  
E: [NW15info@hsag.com](mailto:NW15info@hsag.com)  
[www.hsag.com/ESRDNetwork15](http://www.hsag.com/ESRDNetwork15)  
3025 S. Parker Rd., Suite 820  
Aurora, CO 80014

#### Network 17: American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Northern California, Northern Mariana Islands

T: 800.232.3773  
E: [NW17info@hsag.com](mailto:NW17info@hsag.com)  
[www.hsag.com/ESRDNetwork17](http://www.hsag.com/ESRDNetwork17)  
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## Living Well With Diabetes

Making good choices is important for living well with diabetes. In many cases, eating food that is good for you, having a healthy weight, exercising, and going to your regular checkups can help you control your diabetes. You should also take care of your feet, test your blood sugar, and take your medicine just like your doctor tells you to. During the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, it is also important to wear a mask when you are outside your home and wash your hands regularly to keep from getting sick. Other good advice includes:



- Getting help from a diabetes care and educational specialist who is an expert. This person can help you:
  - Watch your blood-sugar levels better.
  - Have better cholesterol levels.
  - Have better blood pressure.
  - Explore ways to reduce medication costs.
- Attending a self-management educational program that can help you take care of yourself better.

Find out more at <https://www.diabeteseducator.org> or <https://www.cdc.gov/learnmorefeelbetter/programs/diabetes.htm>.

Source: Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists. Resources for People Living with Diabetes. Available at <https://www.diabeteseducator.org/living-with-diabetes/how-a-diabetes-educator-can-help-you>. Accessed on Sept. 9, 2020.

### Websites to Visit for More Information on Kidney Disease

The American Association of Kidney Patients: <https://aakp.org/>  
Medical Education Institute: <https://www.kidneyschool.org/>  
National Kidney Foundation: <https://www.kidney.org/>  
Polycystic Kidney Disease Foundation: <https://pkdcure.org/>

### Feedback!

Let us know how we're doing. Take a brief survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/October2020Newsletter> or ask your care team for a feedback form.

