

# Kidney *Chronicles*

IPRO END-STAGE RENAL DISEASE NETWORK OF NEW YORK

JULY/AUGUST  
2016

HELPFUL TIPS  
TO EMPOWER  
ESRD PATIENTS  
AS CONSUMERS



Improving Healthcare  
for the Common Good®

## Protect yourself. Get the vaccines you need.

**V**accines (also known as vaccinations or shots) are a safe, sure way to protect yourself from serious illness. A doctor or a nurse “injects” the vaccine into your upper arm or leg. Each vaccine contains a weak version of a bacteria and/or virus. Vaccines help protect your body against infection by acting like an infection, without making you sick. After you receive a vaccine your body’s immune system develops the same response as it would to a real infection, and it becomes resistant to the bacteria and/or virus in the vaccine. Some people have a mild fever and slight discomfort, soreness, or a rash around the injection area after they receive a vaccine. If your symptoms are more severe after your vaccine, contact your dialysis healthcare team as soon as possible.

### The Importance of Getting Vaccinated

As a dialysis patient or transplant recipient you are more likely than others to develop other diseases, infections, and viruses. This is because your immune system does not work as well as the immune system of a person with healthy kidneys. To avoid these illnesses, people on dialysis **MUST** receive the following three vaccinations:

#### I. Annual Flu Shot (Influenza Vaccine)

Influenza (“flu”) is a contagious and serious respiratory disease. As a dialysis patient or transplant recipient, if you get the flu you are more likely than others to develop serious problems. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), February is the month when the most people get the flu. However, they point out that flu season can last until late May. It is recommended that you receive a flu shot once a year. To learn more about the flu vaccine, please speak with your healthcare team, contact the Network, or visit [www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm).

### How the Network Serves You

- Advocates for you;
- Answers your questions about treatment, modality choices or other issues;
- Develops and provides educational materials for you and your family;
- Works with renal professionals to improve the care given to you;
- Helps keep you informed and updated to support your involvement in your care and treatment options; and
- Evaluates and resolves grievances.

**In an emergency,  
if you can't reach  
your facility,  
contact us.**

## Protect yourself...Get the vaccines...

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### 2. Pneumonia Vaccine (Pneumovax 23)

Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs that can lead to serious illness. Pneumonia infections are caused by bacteria and can often be prevented and treated. The pneumonia (pneumococcal) vaccine protects your body against 23 different types of infectious bacteria pneumonia. You should receive the pneumococcal vaccine every five years. To learn more about the pneumonia vaccine, please speak with your healthcare team, contact the Network, or visit [www.cdc.gov/pneumococcal/vaccination.html](http://www.cdc.gov/pneumococcal/vaccination.html)

### 3. Hepatitis B Vaccine

"Hepatitis" is an inflammation of the liver. It is spread through contact with blood or body fluids from someone who has the virus. Dialysis patients are at greater risk than others for hepatitis because of the repeated access to the bloodstream during treatment. The hepatitis B vaccine is the best protection available against the virus. It also protects against a form of liver cancer caused by hepatitis B. The hepatitis B vaccine is usually given in a series of three to four doses over a six-month period. To learn more about hepatitis B and its preventive vaccination, please speak with your healthcare team, contact the Network, or visit [www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/abc/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/abc/index.htm)

### Other Vaccines

Your doctor may recommend other vaccines, depending on your age, the type of treatment you receive, and how long you have been on dialysis. These vaccines may include the herpes zoster (shingles) vaccine and the measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine. If you are not sure about which vaccines you should be receiving, talk to your dialysis healthcare team or your primary care physician.

## The Patient Advisory Committee (PAC) and Vaccinations

*What are members of the Network's Patient Advisory Committee (PAC) saying about vaccines on the IPRO ESRD Program's Facebook page?*

"I get the influenza shot every October. The staff at my dialysis facility is really good about making sure all of our vaccinations are up date."

"I have gotten the Influenza, Pneumonia, and Hepatitis B vaccine. I also received the pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine to protect my young children."

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**To file a grievance, please contact:**

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Developed by IPRO ESRD Network of New York while under contract with Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.  
Contract HHSM-500-2016-00020C