

Helping health providers answer questions about dialysis through NIH videos

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Health care providers can now take advantage of a new video series to help them talk with patients about preparing for dialysis treatments, the National Institutes of Health announced today.

The eight short videos cover some of the most common questions patients ask about surgery to create an AV fistula, a connection between an artery and a vein in the arm that allows adequate blood flow for [dialysis](#). The videos were produced by the NIH's National Kidney Disease Education Program (NKDEP) and the Fistula First Breakthrough Initiative (FFBI).

"We know that it is sometimes difficult for primary care providers to talk with patients about the different aspects of dialysis preparation," said Andrew S. Narva, M.D., NKDEP director. "We hope these videos will help providers feel more comfortable discussing fistula placement so those important conversations can happen earlier in the disease process."

A normal vein would not allow blood to flow rapidly enough to and from the dialysis machine, and repeated needle punctures would harm the vein. "We encourage patients to have a fistula placed in an arm several months before we anticipate they will need dialysis," Narva said. Advance placement allows time for the fistula to heal so it is ready for the first [dialysis treatment](#).

"It is important for patients and their families to understand the need for

permanent vascular access," said Brandy Vinson, FFBI project manager. "Fistulas provide such access, so we are pleased to have developed this video series with NKDEP. It helps us carry out our mission to meet patient and provider needs."

Each one- to two-minute video features Betty Garrison, an actual patient who is facing dialysis, and Narva, a board-certified nephrologist who answers her questions.

"[Patients](#) facing dialysis need to understand what is happening to them and to their bodies," said Garrison. "I was still a little fearful after talking with Dr. Narva, but I had my surgery because I knew it would help me in the long run. My fistula will be ready when I need to start dialysis."

More information: The video series is featured on the websites of NKDEP and FFBI. To access the videos on the NKDEP site, visit the AV Fistula Placement section of www.nkdep.nih.gov/professional ... reducation/index.htm . Find them on the FFBI site at www.fistulafirst.org/ProviderEducationalVideos.aspx .

Provided by National Institutes of Health

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