

Facts you should know!

On average, patients who dialyze with a catheter are **15 times more likely to get a vascular-access related infection** than patients using an arteriovenous (AV) fistula for dialysis.

Patients who receive dialysis with a catheter **spend on average 35 days per year in the hospital** compared with only 7.7 days for patients with an AV fistula.

Patients who dialyze with a catheter **have two times the risk of death** compared to patients who use an AV fistula.

Patients using catheters have a **38 percent greater risk for a major heart problem.**

Patients who use an **AV fistula report greater physical activity, energy, and emotional and social wellbeing** compared to patients using a catheter.

Talk to your health care team today about being evaluated for an AV fistula.

Midwest Kidney Network is a private, nonprofit organization and contractor with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS).

Our mission is to assess and improve the quality of care provided to people with kidney disease through the following actions.

- Respond to patient concerns about their care.
- Help providers improve care and quality of life for dialysis and kidney transplant patients.
- Maintain the patient database that supports the national kidney disease program.
- Partner with other ESRD Networks, State Survey Agencies, ESRD providers, and organizations helping people with kidney disease.



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Midwest Kidney Network

Fistula or Catheter: Patient Perspectives



Dialysis patients share their stories about choosing vascular access.



Fistula or Catheter: Patient Perspectives

"I'm glad that my catheter allows me to leave sooner after dialysis, and I do not have to wait like other patients."



"Complications with my catheter put me in the hospital; I wish I could be spending more time at home with family."

"I like having a catheter—I don't have to wait around for my needle sites to clot."

"I do have to wait around for a few minutes after dialysis for my sites to clot, but I haven't been in the hospital since my catheter was removed."



"With this catheter, I don't think I look as sick as those patients with a fistula in their arm."



"I am glad now that I have a fistula. I look and feel physically better! With my catheter, I couldn't hide my lack of wellness."



"I feel so much better now that I can be out more with my friends and family. I couldn't do this with a catheter."



"I chose a catheter. I feel like I have enough energy."

"Infection is a risk, but if I keep my catheter clean I can control it."



"With a catheter, my wife cared for me at home. *Even her nursing skills could not keep me free from infections.* I don't worry about that now that I have a fistula."