

## How to Help Patients with Modality Decision-making

These suggestions are excerpted from “*Strategies for Improving Dialysis Decision Making*” by Anne Campbell, and published in *Peritoneal Dialysis International*, Vol.11, pp 173-178, 1991.

- **Get to know the patient.** The time spent will pay off in the long run.
- **Inquire about patients’ existing dialysis information.** Determine the source, so you can address misinformation and biases upfront.
- **Set up a framework for your discussions.** It helps patients to know why & how you’ll be talking about dialysis.
- **Use only one educator.** A single source of information builds patient rapport and maintains consistency.
- **Conduct separate education sessions for different modalities.** Improves comprehension and reduces bias.
- **Try to link dialysis education with previous learning.** Connections strengthen learning.
- **Allow enough time.** Early education promotes understanding, more cost-effective outpatient procedures (for accesses and catheters) and better decision-making.
- **Always present BOTH hemo and PD.** Patients need to know there are options.
- **Discuss pros and cons of each treatment thoroughly.** Have patients make their own lists to ensure they can visualize real differences.
- **Ask patients to “try on” each type of dialysis.** This exercise makes the decision more pragmatic.
- **Desensitize when anxiety is high.** Patients will be better prepared to start therapy.