

Latino, Black Patients in Dialysis at Higher Risk for Infections

Latino patients are 40% more likely to contract a staph infection compared with white patients.

February 17, 2023 By Laura Schmidt

Latino and Black kidney disease patients on dialysis are more likely to contract a potentially deadly blood infection compared with people not receiving treatment, according to U.S. government health officials,

The new [Vital Signs report](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that Latino patients are about 40% more likely to contract a staph bloodstream infection while on [dialysis](#) compared with white patients. Black patients are also about 10% more likely to contract a blood infection, according to the report.

According to the CDC, more than 800,000 people are living with end-stage [kidney disease](#) in the United States and 70% are treated with dialysis. Black people make up about one in three patients on dialysis, and Latinos make up one in five.

Dialysis is a procedure that runs a person's blood through a machine to filter out waste products and remove excess fluid, essentially acting as healthy kidneys would. While dialysis is a relatively safe, there are some risks associated with the procedure.

Germs—such as *Staphylococcus aureus*—can easily spread from needles or catheters used during dialysis. Staph infections can be deadly, and some strains have even developed resistance to some common [antibiotics](#).

“Preventing staph bloodstream infections begins by detecting chronic kidney disease in its early stages to prevent or delay the need for dialysis,” CDC Chief Medical Officer Debra Houry, MD, MPH, said in a [CDC news release](#).

The report noted that people living in areas marked by higher poverty, crowded homes and lower education among residents experienced higher rates of staph bloodstream infections.

“Health care providers can promote preventative practices, including methods to manage diabetes and high blood pressure, as well as provide education on treatment options among all patients and particularly those at greatest risk to slow the progression of chronic kidney disease,” she added.

