SPICE UP YOUR MEALS
DITCH THE SALT, NOT THE FLAVOR!

HOME HEMO
THROUGH THE EYES OF A PATIENT AND CARE PARTNER

CARING FOR YOUR ACCESS
HOW TO KEEP YOURS WORKING WELL
Season’s Greetings

I’m from a large family with many holiday traditions. One of my favorites is a game where everybody brings a small, wrapped gift that costs no more than $10. Many of the gifts are useless, silly, or funny. We choose numbers to determine the order in which we will select gifts. Each family member has the choice of choosing a new, wrapped gift or taking the gift of someone else who has already selected.

There is a great deal of laughter when the gifts are opened. Once I ended up with a pair of XXL smiley-face boxers and my mom ended up with an ornamental fish that sang “Happy Birthday” each time someone passed by.

Even now the memory of my family and that game brings a smile to my face. That is what I wish for each of you this holiday season—great memories and smiles. This issue offers ways to stay healthy and live well on dialysis during the holiday season and throughout the year.

Take time to remember wonderful occasions with family or friends. Those memories will bring a smile to your face. Smiles are contagious, so your smile might also bring one to someone else. What a wonderful gift!

Dorothy Davis
Patient Editor, Kidney Living

Happy Holidays,

Dorothy Davis

kidney living is published by the National Kidney Foundation (NKF). Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the position of the NKF or its sponsor. The NKF reserves the right to edit all articles. Please contact the NKF for article submission guidelines or permission to reprint articles.
What’s in this Issue?

FEATURE ARTICLE

4 Home Hemo is a Slam Dunk
Learn about home hemodialysis from a patient and their care partner.

IN EVERY ISSUE....

8 Ask Your Healthcare Team
My doctor says a fistula is the best type of access for hemodialysis but I’m afraid of needles. Is it really so bad to keep the catheter forever?

11 Kidney Kitchen
Spice up your life! Limit salt without missing out on flavor

14 kidney living Voices
What have you learned “along the way” that might help others? What advice would you give someone starting dialysis?
Isaiah Jackson, an avid sports fan and youth basketball coach, is not a newcomer to kidney disease or dialysis, nor is he willing to let it stand in his way. In 1987, after high blood pressure took its toll on his kidneys, he was told he needed dialysis treatment or a kidney transplant to survive.

He began home hemodialysis three times a week while he waited for a kidney transplant. He was fortunate to receive a kidney from a deceased donor six months later. That match was a success and the transplanted kidney gave him “more than twenty wonderful years without dialysis,” says Jackson.

Then in 2009, when his transplanted kidney was no longer working very well, he needed to start dialysis again. The choice was easy for him. “Blessed with a very wonderful dialysis partner – my wife – I knew I wanted to go back on home hemodialysis. It allows me to dialyze more frequently and on my own schedule — whether that’s 4:00 am, 11:00 pm or anytime in between.”

Jackson continues, “Dialysis doesn’t define who I am, it just lets me keep to my weekly routine. I dialyze five to six times a week and it not only keeps me alive, it allows me to thrive.”

He exudes that same upbeat attitude when he talks about his family. A husband, father, and grandfather, he says he has “a lot to live for.” With three grandchildren and another on the way, Jackson may have officially retired from his job as a civil servant a year ago, but he hasn’t shown signs of slowing down.

“Dialysis allows me to thrive.”

After spending 40 years building a youth basketball league legacy named after him, he is grooming his adult children to follow in his coaching footsteps. His older grandkids, ages eight and five, also play in the league.

Kidney disease is a part of Jackson’s life, but he refuses to let it hinder his life plans. The patience that made him such a great coach persists off the court as well. Always optimistic, he awaits a new kidney and another grandchild.
1. How do you fit dialysis around your routine and other activities?
The short answer is that dialysis comes first, but because home hemodialysis gives us so much scheduling freedom, we work dialysis around our other activities, such as family time and being present at our grandchildren’s sporting and school events. We usually end up dialyzing in the early morning before work or late at night after dinner and any other evening functions. I can’t emphasis enough how much we love the flexibility home hemodialysis affords us. The ability to be on our own schedule, as opposed to that of the dialysis clinic, is really important to us because we never feel like “we’re missing out” on anything.

2. What makes you feel confident about doing home hemodialysis?
We participated in an extensive training process before starting home hemodialysis, and that really equipped us for the routine as well as for any abnormal situations that may arise. We feel confident that we can troubleshoot machine alarms and we also have an emergency system in place in case we need additional help.

3. How has home dialysis changed your life, relationship with your partner, and daily routine?
Isaiah and I have gotten a lot closer through home hemodialysis because we’re always together! Whether doing treatment or any other activities, we create our schedule together and this has really strengthened our relationship. It’s actually nice that we can all be together during Isaiah’s treatments since they take place in the comfort of our own home. I am very fortunate to have a flexible work schedule, so I am able to work during the hours that are most convenient for me.

4. What do you do when you need to travel or you are sick?
If that happens, Isaiah will go to the dialysis clinic near us. This has actually only happened about five times in four years, so it’s pretty rare, but it’s good to know that we have options.

5. What would you advise other families who might be considering home hemodialysis?
It’s a good option! Home hemodialysis has worked really well for Isaiah and our family. He feels healthier and less tired when he receives more frequent, shorter treatment sessions. I highly recommend that everyone who likes a flexible schedule consider it. Also, if you’re able to do so, talk with someone who has been through the process beforehand in order to make an informed decision about the type of dialysis treatment that’s the best fit for you.

We talked with Jeanette Jackson, Isaiah’s Wife and care partner, to learn about home hemodialysis from her perspective.
The Flu: Protect Yourself

As flu season approaches, kidney patients need to know how to protect themselves from the flu! You also need to know what to do if you become sick.

To prevent the flu, the first and most important action to take is to get a flu shot. People on dialysis are at greater risk of suffering from the flu. When more people get vaccinated, it is less likely that a flu epidemic will spread. Even if you are vaccinated, it is still possible to get the flu, but the disease is usually much milder.

If you get the flu, stay home and rest! Be sure to still attend your scheduled dialysis treatments. Monitor your temperature and blood pressure carefully and report concerns to your physician.

If you have nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, you should contact your doctor. Any over-the-counter medication that you take for a cold or flu should be approved by your doctor.

Top 5 Ways to Stay Healthy This Winter

1. Get a flu shot — As flu season approaches, kidney patients need to learn how to prevent the flu. Getting a flu shot early on in the season is a critical step. It’s always important to check with your doctor to determine which type of flu vaccine is best for you.

2. A good night’s sleep goes a long way — Being well rested is more important than many people realize. In the fall, the days grow shorter which can throw off people’s sleep cycles. It’s important to be mindful of this so that you ensure you’re getting enough sleep.

3. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water — Keeping your hands clean is the best way to prevent the spread of germs and infections. Carry hand sanitizer if you’re on the go.

4. Eat healthy — Eating a balanced diet and getting proper nutrients is key to staying off sickness! This is especially important with all the temptations that come along with the holiday season. Talk to your renal dietitian about your specific diet needs. Check out NKF’s Kidney Kitchen for some healthy alternatives to many holiday recipes: kidney.org/patients/kidneykitchen

5. Stay away from others who are sick — This can be challenging because sometimes it is hard to tell whether the people around you are getting sick. If you know that a loved one is ill, make sure to keep your distance to prevent yourself from getting sick. Additionally, minimize the spread of germs throughout the house by disinfecting common areas of your home. You can do this by wiping down door handles and counter tops. Also, make sure you wash the sick person’s linens.
One thing our extended family did several years ago was to give the gift of time—doing something together instead of a purchased and wrapped gift. It could involve spending money on a shared experience such as getting a manicure together, having dinner/lunch/coffee, going on a hike, taking a walk in a park or on the beach, taking a drive, planning a picnic or anything that involves spending time with each other. The nieces and nephews, aunts and grandparents all loved this and we now have a tradition of all going to see the Nutcracker followed by dinner all in one big group. -Laura Weber

As a professional chef, my world is food! I’ve made a gingerbread mix, soup mix and spice blends to give as gifts to people. -Duane Sunwold

I bought 10 pre-paid gift cards, fairly small in amounts, like for music, a deli shop, and local restaurants, and hid them in places for my wife to find. I then wrote 9 clue cards. I put the first clue in a sealed envelope in her stocking, and from there she had a very pleasant treasure hunt throughout Christmas morning. Then in the following months we enjoyed going out to the various eateries together—it gave us some date nights! -Ted Latour
Focus on Access

The key members of your healthcare team include your doctor, advanced practitioner, nurse, social worker, dietitian, patient care technician...and YOU! To be an active, informed member of your healthcare team, you need to ask lots of questions.

In each issue of Kidney Living, we will respond to common questions from dialysis patients.

Q

My doctor says a fistula is the best type of access for hemodialysis, but I’m afraid of needles. Is it really so bad to keep the catheter forever?

A

Long-term use of catheters can cause infections and other serious problems. Catheters are generally used as a temporary access, but sometimes they are permanent.

A fistula should be considered the first choice for your access because it generally lasts longer and causes fewer problems such as infections and clotting. However, some patients may not be able to have a fistula because their blood vessels are not strong enough. A graft is considered the second choice for an access.

Being afraid of needles is a common fear. For patients who have difficulty with pain at the needle stick sites, ask your doctor or nurse practitioner if local treatment with a cream or a spray might be helpful. Your social worker can also help you cope with fear and anxiety from the needles.

Many patients find that they get used to the needle sticks over time. Some patients even learn to place the needles themselves and report feeling that this gives them more control over their treatment. Talk with your dialysis care team if you are interested in learning how to become more involved in your treatment.

Whether your access is a fistula, graft or catheter, you should make sure to take good care of it. Your dialysis care team will check your access often to make sure it is working well. A faulty access can decrease the amount of dialysis you receive. Your dialysis care team will teach you how to check your fistula or graft at home each day.
I have been a peritoneal dialysis patient for over 3 years. Like all peritoneal dialysis patients, I know how important it is to prevent infection (peritonitis). Doing peritoneal dialysis at home, I’ve made these essential steps to protect myself as part of my daily care routine. I always keep my access site covered and tape the tubing to my body with a 4 x 4” bandage. I find that this helps keep my tubing in place while I go about my busy life, and cuts down on irritation.

When showering, it is important to clean your whole body before cleaning your exit site. Then, use antibacterial soap to clean your site by starting right at the site and then gently wiping around it with a continual circular motion while moving away from it. After cleaning, dry and treat your site away from the bathroom. I perform my treatments in my bedroom, so I dry the area thoroughly there with a gauze pad. I apply an antiseptic with a second gauze pad.

If a scab forms around your exit site, you should cleanse it again with an antiseptic. Picking at it and trying to remove it can lead to an infection. It is important to follow the infection control training you received at the dialysis clinic and make sterile care of your catheter part of your daily routine. That will greatly reduce the risk of infection to your access site.

A few minutes of extra care is worth the effort to prevent peritonitis. If you notice any changes to your access site, or if you see any discharge around the site, contact your dialysis care team immediately.

by Meg Banks

Caring for my Peritoneal Dialysis Catheter

A Patient’s Perspective

Tips!

Here are some tips about daily access care and how to prevent problems.

CATHETER

- Keep the catheter dressing clean and dry.
- Make sure the area of the access is cleaned and the dressing is changed by your care team at each dialysis session.
- Never open your catheter to the air

FISTULA OR GRAFT

- Wash with an antibacterial soap each day, and always before dialysis. Do not scratch your skin or pick scabs.
- Check for redness, a feeling of excess warmth or the beginning of a pimple on any area of your access.
- Do not let anyone use a blood pressure cuff, draw blood, insert IVs, or give injections such as the flu shot on your access arm.
- Ask your dialysis care team to rotate the needles when you have your dialysis treatment. (Unless you have a special type of needle insertion called the buttonhole technique).
- Check the blood flow each day by feeling for a vibration, also called a pulse or thrill. If you do not feel this, or if there is a change, call your doctor or your dialysis center.
- Do not wear tight clothes or jewelry on your access arm.
- Do not carry anything heavy or do anything that would put pressure on the access.
The buttonhole technique is a method of sticking needles that may be an option for hemodialysis patients with a fistula. In the buttonhole technique, dull needles are stuck in the same site for each dialysis treatment. Sticking the needles in the same place creates a “tunneled track” for the needle and over time may be less painful. Talk with your nephrologist or advanced practitioner if you are interested in learning more about the buttonhole technique. It’s important to make sure you perform the buttonhole technique correctly to reduce problems. Infection is the biggest concern with this technique. Focusing on these details can result in buttonhole sites that will last a long time without problems. Here are some ways to reduce your risks:

**Skin cleaning** — Because buttonhole sites are permanent exit sites, bacteria will collect around the sites. Staph (short for *Staphylococcus*) is a type of bacteria commonly found on the skin that is generally harmless, but can cause infection if sterile technique is not used when caring for a dialysis access. Patients on dialysis have more staph on their skin than the general population. Therefore, extra cleaning is needed and the following are steps to take:

- Wash your access
- Before removing scabs, disinfect sites
- Remove scabs completely
- Disinfect one more time
- Let skin dry
- Cannulate (insert needles)

**Wear a mask** — Staph is also found in the nose and you can breathe bacteria onto your buttonhole sites. Buttonhole infections are identical to catheter infections, so wear a mask when inserting and removing your needles.

**Removing scabs** — As you sit during dialysis, the staph you removed with cleaning comes back. When you take out your needles, some blood comes in contact with your skin to form a scab. The staph on your skin then becomes part of the scab. That is why scabs must be removed completely the next time.

**Correct angle of insertion** — Inserting your needles at the exact same angle and depth is critical for making perfect buttonhole sites.

- Not hitting the same site can cause the following:
  - Aneurysms
  - Extra tunnels for bacteria to hide in
  - Inability to change over to blunt needles

**Holding your sites** — After pulling your needle, hold one site at a time using two fingers. Every needle makes two holes: One in the surface of the skin; and, one in the blood vessel wall. Two fingers will cover both holes, making a solid clot. This will prevent blood from filling your tunnel causing a large blood clot, and will instead form smaller scabs that will be easier to remove.
Spice Up Your Life

Limit Salt Without Missing out on Flavor!

Ditch your salt shaker and experiment with fresh herbs and spices! Some easy ways to add flavor to your favorite dish are by adding fresh garlic, onion, pepper, or fresh lemon or lime juice.

Some salt is needed for body water balance. But when your kidneys lose the ability to control sodium and water balance, you may experience increased thirst, fluid gain, high blood pressure, or discomfort during dialysis. By using less sodium in your diet, you can control these problems.

Remember, herbs and spices should not overpower the taste of your food, so add them in small amounts. Since salt enhances or increases flavors, however, you may need to use slightly more of a spice than what is called for in a standard recipe. It is best to crush or rub leaf-type herbs to release their full flavor. You can also buy premixed salt-free seasonings; but, talk with your dietitian before buying one, since most have a large amount of potassium, and potassium can actually be more harmful to you than salt.

IDEAS FOR ADDING SPICE TO YOUR FAVORITE FOODS!

- **BASIL** lamb, fish, eggs, vegetables
- **CINNAMON** chicken, pork, fruits, baked products, beverages, vegetables
- **CLOVES** beef, pork, fruits
- **CURRY** (salt-free) beef, chicken, lamb, veal, eggs
- **DILL** chicken, veal, fish, vegetables
- **GINGER** chicken, pork, fruits, vegetables, baked products, beverages
- **PARSLEY** beef, chicken, fish, salads, sauces
- **ROSEMARY** beef, lamb, chicken, turkey
- **SAGE** meats, fish, stuffing, vegetables
- **THYME** fish, meats, poultry, eggs, stuffing, vegetables

Spice up your meals all day! Kidney Kitchen
KIDNEY KITCHEN

Meals with Spice!

Mexican Eggs

Turkey Fajitas

Cajun Pork Chops
BREAKFAST

Mexican Eggs
Serves 8 (1/2 cup per serving)

INGREDIENTS:
- 2 tablespoons margarine
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 1/2 cups frozen corn, thawed
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 8 eggs, beaten, or 2 cups low-cholesterol egg substitute
- 2 cups unsalted corn chips
- 2 tablespoons chopped pimiento

DIRECTIONS:
In a large skillet, sauté onion and garlic in margarine until onion is soft. Add corn, cumin, and cayenne. Stir to combine. Pour in eggs or egg substitute and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, until eggs are set. Arrange corn chips on a large platter. Spoon egg mixture on chips and sprinkle with pimiento. Serve immediately.

ANALYSIS:
- Calories: 214
- Carbohydrates: 13g
- Protein: 9g
- Fat: 14g
- Sodium: 147mg
- Potassium: 240mg
- Phosphorus: 91mg

Kidney and Kidney Diabetic Exchanges:
- 1 Meat
- 1 Starch
- 1 Medium Potassium
- 1 Vegetable
- 1 Fat

LUNCH

Turkey Fajitas
Serves 10 (About 1 1/2 oz turkey, 1/2 tsp salsa, 1 tortilla, 1/3 cup lettuce, and 2 tsp sour cream per serving)

INGREDIENTS:
- 1 lb. boneless turkey breast
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro (coriander), divided
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 cup chopped tomato
- 1 tablespoon chopped red onion
- 1/4 teaspoon minced garlic
- 10 7-inch flour tortillas
- 3 cups shredded lettuce
- 1/2 cup light sour cream

DIRECTIONS:
Sprinkle turkey with pepper, 1 clove minced garlic, chili powder, lime juice, 1 tablespoon cilantro and oil. Turn to coat. Cover and marinate in refrigerator 3 hours or more. To make salsa, combine tomato, 2 tablespoons cilantro, onion and 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder in a small bowl. Let stand 1 hour. Broil turkey 6 inches from heat for 10 minutes each side. Cut into strips. While turkey cooks, wrap tortillas in aluminum foil and warm in oven for 8 minutes. To serve, wrap turkey, salsa, lettuce and sour cream in warm tortillas.

ANALYSIS:
- Calories: 208
- Carbohydrates: 19g
- Protein: 13g
- Fat: 9g
- Sodium: 192mg
- Potassium: 204mg
- Phosphorus: 129mg

Kidney and Kidney Diabetic Exchanges:
- 2 Meat
- 1 Starch

DINNER

Cajun Pork Chops
Serves 4 (1 chop per serving)

INGREDIENTS:
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon ground sage
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 4 pork chops cut 1/2-inch thick (4 ounces each)
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 1 tablespoon margarine
- 1 teaspoon parsley flakes
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 to 3 drops hot pepper sauce

DIRECTIONS:
Combine paprika, 1/4 tsp. garlic powder, thyme, mustard, sage, cumin, and pepper on waxed paper. Coat both sides of pork chops with this mixture. Arrange in a single layer topped with onion slices on a microwave-safe dish. Cover with waxed paper. Microwave on high for 5 minutes. Rotate dish and microwave on low (30%) for 25 minutes or until tender, rotating once. Let rest while preparing sauce. Combine margarine, parsley, 1/8 tsp. garlic powder and pepper sauce in a small glass bowl. Microwave on high for 30 seconds until melted. Spoon over chops before serving.

ANALYSIS:
- Calories: 243
- Carbohydrates: 3g
- Protein: 22g
- Fat: 16g
- Sodium: 75mg
- Potassium: 447mg
- Phosphorus: 245mg

Kidney and Kidney Diabetic Exchanges:
- 3 Meat
- 1 Medium Potassium
got ADVICE?

Life on dialysis can be challenging at times. What have you learned “along the way” that might help others? What advice would you give someone who is starting dialysis?

The best thing I did as a dialysis patient was to never stop learning about dialysis and kidney disease. It’s a lot to learn at once, so just try to learn one new thing every week. Talk to other patients in your clinic, read information online and have conversations with your medical team. You can never have too much knowledge about being on dialysis.

– Julia H.

Choose a treatment that fits best with your lifestyle. I started doing in-center hemodialysis. I later moved on to home hemodialysis. Then, I decided to do peritoneal dialysis and I found that it worked best for me because I used the cycler at night and had the whole day to do what I wished!

– Keith C.

Keep an eye on your fluid intake and remember to take your meds every day and try to exercise as often as possible.

– Lorenzo D.

I began dialysis at age 28. I was scared, angry, and depressed. Now 4 years later, I’ve learned that dialysis isn’t a death sentence unless you want it to be. It allows me to live longer to be with my son. It’s not always easy but you must tell yourself that “it could always be much worse.”

– Tamika S.

As the mother of a kidney patient, all I can say is STAY POSITIVE! My son was born with abnormally small kidneys that failed when he was 23 years old. He learned to manage being on peritoneal dialysis so well that he was able to go to Disney World!

– Julia Dawn M.

My advice to others who are starting dialysis is take one day at the time, get plenty of rest, watch your fluids and food intake. Being on dialysis has taught me to see that life is precious, fragile, and WORTH LIVING. I have been living with kidney failure for the past 31 years. I am thankful to have this treatment available that gives me the opportunity to live so I can spend time with my family.

– Elizabeth K.

Be proactive in regard to your health. Learn all you can about your treatment options and what all the terms are for lab work and what they mean. Don’t hesitate to speak up if something doesn’t seem or feel right. You know your body better than anyone. Follow your diet and fluid intake and your treatment will be easier on you. And remember, there are no stupid questions. So ask, ask, ask!

– Michael S.

My personal advice would be to listen to your nephrologist. DO NOT overload on liquids. Take your binders and any other medications prescribed to you. You will have hard times but try and exercise and live a productive life. Do not skip treatments and do your full time on the machine. If you’re going on vacation, make sure you have a dialysis center in place before you make your plans. And most of all, remember the nurses and dialysis technicians are there to help you so if there’s a problem, make sure you speak up.

– Sandra G.
Celebrate Social Workers!
Tell your social worker you appreciate them

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF CNSW

Social workers are an important member of your dialysis team. They are specially trained to help you and your family cope with kidney disease and adjust to life on dialysis. Social workers can help improve the quality of life for you and your family by providing emotional support and counseling, and identifying ways to help you access services provided by federal, state, and community agencies.

For the last 40 years, the Council of Nephrology Social Workers (CNSW) has been working closely with the NKF and the federal government to provide better care for dialysis patients.

Join the National Kidney Foundation in celebrating the 40th Anniversary of CNSW!

LIVING WELL WITH KIDNEY FAILURE

is a video series with six companion booklets to help patients and their families learn about kidney failure and its treatment.

Tell your dialysis center to request a free copy for your unit today at www.kidney.org/lwkf
Reclaim your life with portable home hemodialysis

The NxStage System One™ is a prescription device. All forms of hemodialysis, including treatments performed in-center and at home, involve some risks. In addition, there are certain risks unique to treatment in the home environment. Patients differ and not everyone will experience the reported benefits of home hemodialysis. Talk to your doctor to see if home hemodialysis with NxStage is right for you.

© 2013 NxStage Medical, Inc. NxStage is a registered trademark of NxStage Medical, Inc. System One is a trademark of NxStage Medical, Inc. CAUTION: Federal law restricts this device to sale by or on the order of a physician. APM1103 Rev. A