

Kidney Concerns

News for Kidney Patients and Their Families

Fall 2017

Informed, Empowered, Engaged

In this issue...

The next couple issues of Kidney Concerns are going to be exploring the topic of Self-Management. The idea is that there are a lot of things we can do ourselves to feel better and be stronger.

This is not rocket science. We all know that we have a lot of power in our own hands that can affect our everyday lives while we deal with Kidney Failure.

But it IS hard – especially if you are dealing with multiple health issues. To effectively self-manage our lives, we need knowledge, guidance, motivation and support. We are here to help provide all four of these.

This issue of Kidney Concerns will be devoted to diet and fluid issues. We hope to give you knowledge and guidance through a wonderful article by renal dietician Janelle Gonyea. Read it carefully – twice. It contains a lot of important information. We have also included some patient articles to give you both motivation and support.

If you have not started self-managing yet, now is the time to start. If you have started, take some time to tweak your knowledge. Remember, knowledge is power – the power to feel better.

Maggie Carey,

Consumer Committee Chair



**Midwest
Kidney Network**

Helping You Feel Better: Proper Nutrition is Key

Janelle Gonyea, RDN, LD

As a dialysis patient, there are many components of your care that are necessary to ensure that you maintain your health as well as you can. One component is proper nutrition. Your dialysis dietitian is an expert in this area and will meet with you to discuss a diet and fluid plan that meets your unique nutritional needs.

Balancing Your Diet

Factors that affect your dietary recommendations include the type of dialysis you choose, the amount of kidney function you have left, your lab test results and any other medical conditions you might have such as diabetes or heart disease.

Dialysis treatments will remove waste products and extra fluid, but they will build up again between each treatment and become dangerous to your health. People who follow their diet and fluid recommendations typically feel better and have fewer problems during and between dialysis treatments.

Calories and Protein

It is important to maintain a healthy weight and avoid malnutrition. Those who are not well nourished are more likely to be hospitalized and have an increased risk for death. Your dietitian will routinely review what you are eating. If you are not eating enough, you may be advised to take a nutritional supplement. Only take nutritional supplements recommended by your dietitian.

Potassium and Phosphorus

Keeping your lab test results in goal range will help you avoid complications. High potassium levels can cause your heart to stop beating. High phosphorus levels, over time, can thin your bones and result in calcium deposits throughout your body that can lead to a heart attack or painful wounds.

To maintain potassium and phosphorus in goal range, your dietitian will teach you which foods and how much of those foods are good for you to eat.

Medications called phosphate binders are generally needed to block the absorption of phosphorus into your bloodstream where it can harm you.

Your dialysis team will tell you when to start a phosphate binder and the proper dose. Always take it with food.

Heart Health and Fluid Management

Your heart health relies on maintaining good fluid balance by avoiding large fluid gains between dialysis treatments. Carrying too much fluid around in your body can be very stressful to your heart causing it to grow weaker over time. Removing too much fluid during dialysis treatments is stressful to your heart as well. To avoid these concerns, it is important to work with your dietitian to limit your sodium and fluid intake.

Sodium can be limited in the diet by avoiding the salt shaker and use of processed foods high in sodium. Remember to count foods that melt at room temperature as part of your fluid intake.

If you become thirsty despite limiting your sodium intake, talk to your dietitian about ways to relieve your thirst. Also, if you have diabetes, remember that good blood glucose control helps to minimize your thirst.

Dialysis Types and Diet

The type of dialysis you choose can make a difference with respect to your diet and fluid recommendations. In-center hemodialysis which is done at a center three times per week will require more diet and fluid limitations. Without these limits on diet and fluid intake, the buildup between dialysis treatments can become dangerous to your health.

Home dialysis however, whether it is home hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis, is done more frequently and allows more flexibility with your diet because you dialyze more often, thus limiting the time between treatments for wastes and fluid to build up.

All treatment options involve lifestyle changes. Making many changes in your diet can be difficult, causing you to feel frustrated or sad as you may feel there is nothing left in your diet to enjoy or the need to limit social activities where food may be the center of the event.

Talk with your dietitian about how you feel about your diet so they can provide advice about how to cope with your diet and fluid recommendations.

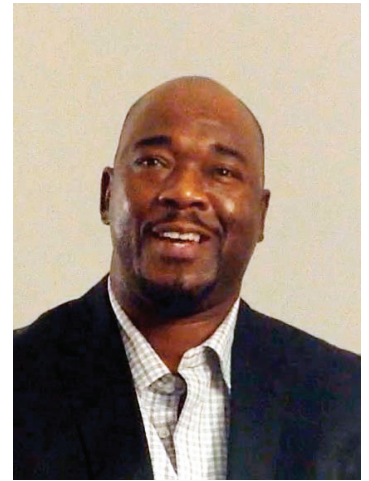
Patient Perspective

Mitchell Broach, Patient Advocate

As you know, in medicine, compliance describes the degree to which a patient correctly follows medical advice, (Doctor's Orders). Adhering to one's medication regiment, following the renal diet, controlling one's fluid intake and never missing dialysis treatments are all part of being compliant.

Each patient's journey is their own and although we have kidney disease in common, our stories are unique. Over 2300 dialysis treatments, over 9600 hours in a dialysis chair, 2 transplants, and 25 years later and I'm still here! My advice to my fellow Kidney Disease patients is to simply be compliant. When you are compliant you'll live a happier healthier life.

Being Compliant, you put your body in the best possible position to receive a transplant when a kidney becomes available for you. Stay true to yourself and follow your doctor's orders. Thanks and God Bless.



Vaccines Protect You and Your Loved Ones

All patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD) have a lowered resistance to infections. Having a lowered resistance makes it easier to develop diseases that can make you very sick. Vaccines lower your chance of getting and spreading certain diseases and disease complications. Vaccines are one of the safest ways to protect your health. Talk to your healthcare team in the dialysis unit or at your doctor's office. They will discuss what you need and let you know how to receive the vaccinations.

	Why?	When?
Influenza (Flu)	The Flu is a lung infection that may lead to hospitalization and pneumonia. It can be easily spread to others.	Flu vaccinations are given once each year, usually in the late summer or early fall.
Hepatitis B	Hepatitis B is a liver disease that is no longer as common due in large part to the development of a Hepatitis B vaccine. Not receiving this vaccination could lead to a new outbreak of the disease.	Hepatitis B vaccination is given in 3 or 4 injections over the course of 6-8 months. Boosters may be given depending on how well patients respond to the vaccine.
Pneumonia	About 400,000 people are hospitalized each year due to pneumonia, and 5-7% of those people die from the disease.	Two vaccines can help to prevent pneumonia. They are given in two different injections, usually 8 weeks apart.



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To file a grievance, please contact Midwest Kidney Network at 1-800-973-3773.
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How can you help other kidney patients?

Midwest Kidney Network is looking for dialysis and transplant patients, and family members of patients, who are interested in joining our strong network of patients to help improve care for dialysis and transplant patients in our five-state region (MI, WI, MN, ND, and SD).

Patients who work with us serve in a variety of ways. These activities usually involve a one hour phone call once a month. The projects we will be working on include: preventing infections, encouraging home dialysis, promoting kidney transplant, and addressing depression.

By volunteering your time, you will help us make care improvements that really matter to you and your family – and to future patients.

If you are interested and willing and able to volunteer, please call us at (800) 973-3773 or email at info@nw11.esrd.net.

