

## **FDA issues a “Black Box” warning relating to EPOGEN® (EPO)**

By Joyce F. Jackson, President and CEO and John Stivelman, MD, Chief Medical Officer

*Editor’s Note: The following article contains the most current information as of press date.*

We want to let you know about changes in the product labeling on EPOGEN® (EPO). The change is due to an announcement from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on March 9, 2007. These changes have been reported on TV, the Internet, and in newspapers around the country. EPO is used to treat anemia in dialysis patients and in some cancer patients.

Due to the FDA’s focus on the use of EPO, the NKC Chief Medical Officer and the NKC Medical Staff Executive Committee will review NKC’s anemia treatment practice for any changes required to provide the best quality care possible for our dialysis patients.

### **Background**

Last month the FDA and Amgen changed the label on EPO to include these statements:

“Use the lowest dose of EPOGEN® [EPO] that will gradually increase the hemoglobin concentration to the lowest level sufficient to avoid the need for red blood cell transfusion.”

“EPOGEN® [EPO] increased the risk for death and for serious cardiovascular events when dosed to achieve a target hemoglobin of greater than 12g/dL.”

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## **5th Annual Breakfast of Hope!**

By Bill Peckham, NKC Trustee, Four-Year Breakfast Table Captain Veteran



*Isaac Hayes*

Join the King of Soul, Isaac Hayes, for the 5th Annual Breakfast of Hope to benefit the Northwest Kidney Centers Foundation.

The 5th Annual Northwest Kidney Centers Foundation Breakfast of Hope will be on Thursday, May 10, at the Seattle Sheraton Hotel in downtown Seattle. The Breakfast is a 60-minute event, starting promptly at 7:30 a.m. and ending at 8:30 a.m. People begin arriving at 7 a.m.

Invite a family member, friend, neighbor or colleague to breakfast downtown and introduce them to NKC. There is no admission fee to attend the Breakfast of Hope. Donations are requested at the end of the hour-long program, and we hope that everyone in attendance will be inspired to donate after listening to the stories of encouragement and hope.

Each of the previous Breakfasts has raised more than \$200,000. This money supports the unreimbursed services NKC provides to our dialysis patients, like emergency grants; community services, such as kidney disease outreach, education and health screenings; and investments in hope, like a dedicated kidney research institute.

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## Black Box Warning

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The scientific literature reports that EPO is used to improve quality of life (to treat shortness of breath, fatigue, etc). The FDA alert did not address this issue.

Northwest Kidney Centers' treatment practices follow national guidelines. As we review our anemia management program with our doctors, we will keep you informed if we believe we need to change our general EPO treatment practices.

If you have any questions, please contact your nephrologist or NKC Chief Medical Officer Dr. John Stivelman at (206) 292-2771, ext 2945.

## "Spring to Life" brings transplant families and community together



*NKC president and CEO Joyce Jackson facilitates a panel discussion on organ donation and transplantation.*

"Spring to Life," held on March 21 at NKC's Lake City offices, was a unique opportunity to hear personal stories from people whose lives have been profoundly changed by organ donation

and transplantation. The room was filled with people eager to hear inspiring stories and the latest transplant techniques, procedures and medications. Panelist included: Lisa Nakamoto, MD, Swedish Hospital Transplant Center; Kami Sneddon, RN, UW Medical Center Transplant Coordinator; Jan Enevoldsen, mother of an organ donor; Kevin DeMahy, kidney transplant recipient; and Eric Dalke, a living kidney donor. If you would like to learn more about transplantation, contact the social worker at your dialysis center.

## World Kidney Day screening event a success

Thanks to all those who encouraged their family members, friends and others to be screened for kidney disease risk factors as a part of our World Kidney Day outreach event. The free health screening event took place on March 15 at NKC's Blagg Pavilion in Lake City.

As a part of our outreach to groups at high risk for kidney disease, NKC urges the family members of its patients to get tested. People who are at increased risk for kidney disease also include those who have diabetes or high blood pressure, are over 60 years of age, or belong to certain ethnic groups: African American, Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Native American.

Thanks to our Chronic Kidney Disease Program for sponsoring this free event.



*Dr. Leanna Tyshler, Chronic Kidney Disease Medical Advisor, counsels Rita M. Pomareda about her screening results and CKD risk factors, while her grandson looks on. Rita's husband has been an NKC dialysis patient for three years.*



*Jasmine Alipio, Chronic Kidney Disease Program Specialist, sticks Ingrid Goodwin, NKC's Public Relations Coordinator, to find out her blood glucose level as part of the free screening event for staff.*

## NKC's highest award goes to Bill Bowden



NKC proudly presents the 2006 Clyde Shields Distinguished Service Award to Bill Bowden, MSW, NKC Social Services Manager.

The nominees' comments about Bill praised his character and dedication and acknowledged the esteem and respect he has garnered from his peers, patients, family members, staff and

the nephrology community during his career.

Almost 24 years ago, Bill joined NKC's Social Services staff of four social workers. Within a few years he became department manager and has grown his department to six full-time and eight part-time social workers.

The Clyde Shields award is the highest honor our organization gives to a non-physician. (Physicians are eligible for the Haviland Award.) The award is named after Clyde Shields and is given to someone who has made a significant contribution to the welfare of kidney patients through advocacy, clinical care or research. Mr. Shields was the first patient that Dr. Belding Scribner treated with dialysis. He donated his body to science, allowing the original team of doctors, nurses and engineers to test their theories of dialysis on him. Clyde lived for 10 more years. His courage through difficult times is an inspiration for people on dialysis.

For Bill, patient-centered services and advocacy are always first and foremost in his work. Like Clyde Shields, Bill has a strong commitment to improving the lives of all those touched by kidney disease. The NKC values of teamwork, integrity, excellence, service and stewardship are not ones Bill

needs to strive for as they are a natural part of his character.

As a fine clinician, he is caring and compassionate, and listens well. Bill's many accomplishments include:

- Working many extra hours to ensure patient needs are met, which was very evident during this winter's challenging weather.
- Administering two NKC Programs for patients: the Scholarship Fund and Emergency Grant Fund.
- Successfully resolving persistent patient transportation issues.
- Educating patients and staff within NKC and in the community.
- Establishing and training staff to deal with issues of death and dying, with difficult patient situations and much more.
- Advocating for chronic kidney disease issues by taking part in NKC's annual Day in Olympia.
- Working to advance his profession through the council of Renal Social Workers, the Northwest Renal Network and other groups.

Clyde Shield is so admired because he used who he was and his situation to make a real difference for other kidney patients and their families. Bill is very clearly following the same path. Please join NKC in expressing congratulations to Bill Bowden!



*Bill Bowden (far left) receives his award from Clyde Shields' sons, Jim and Tom Shields.*

## “Food for the Soul” recipe contest



Submit your favorite “soul food” recipe by **April 20** and you could win fabulous prizes, like a chance to meet Isaac Hayes and a new iPod nano!

Winning recipes will also appear in the *Seattle Medium* newspaper and be featured at the Kidney Health Fest on

Saturday, May 5.

The lucky winners will be awarded as follows:

**1st Prize** – Meet Grammy Award-winning musician, Isaac Hayes, on May 10, at Northwest Kidney Centers’ Breakfast of Hope. Plus, receive his “Kidney Friendly Comfort Foods” cookbook and an iPod nano!

**2nd Prize** – Receive a George Foreman Grill, an Isaac Hayes “Kidney Friendly Comfort Foods” cookbook and an iPod shuffle!

**3rd Prize** – Receive a George Foreman Grill and an Isaac Hayes “Kidney Friendly Comfort Foods” cookbook!

**Rules:** Recipes must be a main or side dish, be low in salt/sodium, fat and sugar, and not contain products with potassium chloride such as “No-salt.”

**Judging Criteria:** Recipes will be judged on taste and ease of preparation.

**How to Enter:** Send your recipe by April 20 to Nikki Gepner at [gepnern@nwkidney.org](mailto:gepnern@nwkidney.org) or by mail or in person to Northwest Kidney Centers, Attn: Nikki Gepner, 700 Broadway, Seattle, WA, 98122.

For more information, please contact Nikki by e-mail at the address above or call her at (206) 292-2771, ext. 2083.

## All are invited to the Kidney Health Fest on May 5, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Location:** African American Academey  
8311 Beacon Avenue South, Seattle.

### Free Admission, Free Lunch, Free Screenings

- Hear dynamic speakers, including King County Executive Ron Sims, Washington State Health Officer Dr. Maxine Hayes and KIRO 7 TV Reporter/Anchor Essex Porter.
- Rock to hip-hop and R&B music mixed onsite by radio stations KUBE 93 and KRIZ 1420/KYIZ 1620.
- Sample delicious food provided by some of Seattle’s top chefs and restaurants.
- Learn how your loved ones can stay kidney healthy while hearing personal stories of inspiration from people living well with kidney disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and other related illnesses.
- Cook and enjoy soul food dishes with NKC’s nutrition staff.
- Enter to win fantastic prizes, like iPods!
- Enjoy live gospel music, singing and stepping performances.
- Bring your entire family, friends and neighbors. Children will have fun meeting Sonics Mascot Squatch and playing in the Kids Korner.
- African Americans are at increased risk for kidney disease, but this is an event for all who want to learn more about staying healthy. Everyone is welcome.
- Come early so you can experience all of the activities and fun. For more information, contact Ingrid Goodwin at (206) 292-2771, ext. 5357, or [Ingrid@nwkidney.org](mailto:Ingrid@nwkidney.org).

SAT., MAY 5TH!

# KIDNEY Health Fest

for African American Families

**Saturday, May 5, 2007**

**9:00 am to 2:00 pm**

**African American Academy  
8311 Beacon Ave. S., Seattle**

- ✧ African Americans are at increased risk for kidney disease. Get tested!

**Special Guests Include:**

- ✧ King County Executive Ron Sims
- ✧ Washington State Health Officer Dr. Maxine Hayes
- ✧ KIRO 7 TV Reporter/Anchor Essex Porter
- ✧ Seattle Sonics Mascot Squatch!

**FREE Admission • FREE Lunch  
PRIZES • KIDS Korner  
FREE Health Screenings  
HEALTHY Soul Food Contest  
MUSIC & Entertainment  
EXHIBITS & Booths  
COOKING Demonstrations**



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## Coach's Corner It is enough

By Sharon Pahlka, kidney patient  
and life coach

“It is enough” were the first words I heard when I tuned

into a radio program. I had no idea what the speaker was talking about, but my ears perked up. I need to listen to this. “Am I a person who never seems to be happy?” I asked myself.

I am not one to say, “It is enough” and retain the peace and happiness that can come with that. I am always out to climb that next higher mountain. “What’s next?” “What else?” Maybe, I’ll be happy when I find a husband or have more courage than now. But what about taking a deep breath, looking around and saying, “What I have here is enough.” Focusing too much on me and what else I think will make me happy gets in the way of being content, grateful, and being the blessing to others that we are meant to be.

“Enough” will be different for each of us, but we should think about what is enough. For me, enough means enjoying the moments of each day that I have, not waylaying my contentment for something I hope will happen in the future. I want to focus on what I can do and what I mean to others. I want to genuinely say, “It is enough.”

**Coaching Question:** When is enough, enough? What will finally make you content?

**Coaching Tip:** You may not be able to choose your emotional reactions; you can choose your responses, behaviors and your focus of attention.

**Homework:** Keep a journal as a way to step out, step back and get back on track.

**Quote:** “Good is not good, where better is expected.” —Thomas Fuller

To read more Coach’s Corner articles, visit Sharon’s Web site: [www.lifeisagift.com](http://www.lifeisagift.com)

## It’s time to quit!!

By Lori Linke, DTR

We all know smoking is bad for you, but the risk of smoking is even greater if you are on dialysis. After six years, the survival rate for dialysis patients who smoke is 55 percent of that of dialysis patients who do not smoke. If you smoke and are on dialysis, your death rate doubles.

Smoking affects all major body systems. It increases the risk of having a heart attack, stroke, blood clots and the loss of body parts, such as a leg. It compounds diabetic complications, weakens the lungs and increases the risk of cancers. Sense of taste decreases making food less desirable.

Ready to quit? Talk with your nephrologist.

Let your doctor know you plan to quit. Your doctor may be able to prescribe a smoking-cessation aid to help ease the cravings. Don’t start with an over-the-counter product before talking with your doctor. Some products may interfere with other medications you are taking.

After speaking with your doctor, put a plan in motion. Set a quit date. Tell your family and friends you are quitting. Let them support you.

Find a substitute habit, such as eating sugarless candy or gum. Have healthy snacks around to help with the withdrawals of the physical addiction. Eat frequent small meals. This will help stabilize your blood sugars and keep your mouth and hands busy. Exercise and don’t forget to reward yourself!

Call the Quit Line, 1-877-270-STOP (7867), for additional support. It’s confidential and free. By calling you will have access to some of the best cessation specialists in the state who can help suggest a personalized quit plan for you.

Other resources to help you quit:

Quitnet.com Quitline.com  
Smokefree.gov Cancer.org



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This year we are working to have more than 900 people attend; if you have never been to a Breakfast of Hope, this is the year to go! This year's Breakfast will feature celebrity guest Isaac Hayes, Grammy Award-winning artist, composer, actor, writer and humanitarian. He will share his stories about his connection to kidney disease and his passion towards its prevention. Robert Mak will be the master of ceremonies this year. He is the host of KING 5 News Up Front.

Isaac Hayes and Robert Mak along with local dignitaries will share their stories about how a friend and/or family member have been touched by kidney disease. Blood relatives of people with kidney disease have a higher risk of developing kidney disease themselves. The Breakfast program will provide tips and tools to reduce one's risk of kidney disease.

The Breakfast is a great opportunity for my circle of support to find out more about the Northwest Kidney Centers, and how NKC helps so many people in our community. Many of the people I invite know I am on dialysis. I have found that they are curious about this part of my life and enjoy spending a comfortable hour learning a bit more about it and about one of our community's true treasures, the world-renowned Northwest Kidney Centers.

To reserve your seat or to become a Breakfast Table Captain, contact Cynthia Hay at (206) 292-2771, ext. 1107, or at hayc@nwkidney.org. Pre-registration is required. More information about the Breakfast of Hope is available on our Web site: [www.nwkidney.org](http://www.nwkidney.org). I hope to see you on May 10! It's going to be a lot of fun.

## Nominate the next Volunteer of the Year



If you have not yet nominated someone for NKC's Volunteer of the Year Award, please consider it.

Nominations are being sought for volunteers who have made exceptional contributions during the year 2006.

All NKC volunteers are eligible, and anyone can nominate a volunteer. Nominees should be volunteers whose contributions and attitude reflect our core values of Teamwork, Integrity, Excellence, Service and Stewardship.

Nominations forms can be found in all NKC dialysis units. If you have any questions, please contact Syrenka Slettebak, Community Health Education and Volunteer Programs Coordinator, at (206) 292-2771, ext. 5355, or [syrenka@nwkidney.org](mailto:syrenka@nwkidney.org).

Nomination forms can be sent via interoffice mail; as a self-mailer; or faxed to Syrenka at (206) 709-8359. The deadline for nominations is Friday, April 27, 2007.

The *Output* is published bi-monthly for kidney patients and interested persons by the Northwest Kidney Centers. It is available on our Web site at [www.nwkidney.org](http://www.nwkidney.org).

The *Output* provides general information and is not intended to serve as a treatment guide. Patients must never change their treatment unless directed to do so by their doctor or transplant team.

Values: Service • Excellence • Integrity • Teamwork • Stewardship  
President and Chief Executive Officer: Joyce F. Jackson  
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## Volunteer profile: Remembering Reginald Diggs

By Syrenka L. Slettebak, Community Health Education and Volunteer Programs Coordinator



*Reginald Diggs shares a moment with his mother, Mary Diggs-Hobson, on a brisk fall day last year. The two of them co-founded AARTH — African American Reach and Teach Health Ministry.*

If you ever had the pleasure of meeting Reginald, you would remember. First, he was 6-feet, 8-inches tall, handsome and had a beautiful smile. He was a former model after all, and hard to miss. Next, you might be surprised by his soft voice and gentle tone. He was a skilled listener, and this served him well when he became an ordained minister.

In this article, I would like to honor a volunteer who is also a kidney patient. This issue's article will be a little different, as one of our wonderful volunteers recently passed away. His passing was sudden and unexpected. We who knew him — staff, patients and volunteers — all mourn his loss.

Reginald began his volunteer work at NKC as my intern. He was finishing his bachelor's degree, and decided to do an internship in community health. Since he had already co-founded AARTH (African Americans Reach and Teach Health Ministry), a nonprofit organization, he arrived with much experience. I found him to be intelligent, enthusiastic, warm, compassionate and thoughtful. He was passionate about addressing health disparities. He was an amazing visionary. And, he had the uncanny ability to maintain a positive attitude under difficult circumstances.

After completing his internship, Reginald became a member of our speakers bureau. He spoke openly about having kidney disease, being on dialysis and living with HIV. He was an excellent public speaker, and he knew how to move people to action. He was also skilled at bringing disparate groups together. Reginald told me that he always wanted to do more, speak more and reach more people. His drive to help others was amazing.

I believe that Reginald Diggs left this world a better place because of his contributions, big heart and caring spirit. He is deeply missed.

If you would like to learn more about Reginald and his work, visit AARTH's Web site at [www.aarth.org](http://www.aarth.org).

A memorial celebration in honor of Reginald will be held on Saturday, April 14, 2007, from 4 to 6 p.m., at the AARTH office: 7728 Rainier Avenue South, Seattle, WA, 98118. For more information, please call (206) 850-2070.