

## Hope is just a click away

By Bill Peckham, Vice Chair, NKC Board of Trustees, Home Hemodialysis Patient



I'm coming out of the closet. I am ready to announce that I am pro chronic kidney disease research. I believe that we need research independent of the kidney industrial complex. We need kidney research that finds solutions to fundamental problems.

I think the Northwest Kidney Centers (NKC) should lead this effort. The NKC mission is to promote the optimal health, quality of life and independence of people with kidney disease, through patient care, education and research. I applaud NKC for their vision of optimal kidney care as a combination of patient care, education and research.



It is like a tricycle. The big wheel in front – providing the power and steering – is direct dialyzer care. (Note: I've coined the term "dialyzer" to mean people with kidney disease who are on dialysis.) The two back wheels – education and research – are what gives the effort stability. This has worked for a long time, for 45 years to be exact. The Northwest Kidney Centers is 45 years old this year. (Happy birthday NKC!) We are rightly proud of the 45 years of service to the Northwest and the world. However, it is time for a dedicated research effort.

Continued on page 4

## Snow, wind, ice... We're getting better at living with strange weather



What a winter we've had! It's hard enough to live with no power and icy roads, but when you depend on traveling to dialysis, this severe weather makes life especially hard.

### Here are some things to remember in cases of adverse weather or emergencies:

All NKC dialysis patients (including home patients) are asked to call their dialysis unit. When in doubt, phone in. We want to know your status so we can help plan your dialysis treatments.

NKC staff will call dialysis patients if services need to be rescheduled. But please call your unit first. See page 5 for a complete phone listing of our dialysis units.

If no one answers when you call your unit, call the toll free Patient Emergency Hotline: **1-800-606-9174**. This line will be answered by a group of NKC staff. You will be asked to give us the phone numbers where you can be reached and to let us know your transportation status. We will call you back later with information about the schedule and location of your treatment.

Continued on page 2

# Buyer beware!

By Gail Cutrell, DTR

Nutrition Facts	
Amount Per Serving*	
<b>Total Fat</b>	12 g
<b>Total Sodium</b>	2 g
<b>Total Carbohydrates</b>	2.7 g
<b>Protein</b>	6.3 g
<b>Total Fat</b>	1.0 g
<b>Sodium</b>	0 g
<b>Total Carbohydrates</b>	186 mg
<b>Protein</b>	26 g
<b>Total Carbohydrates</b>	11 g
<b>Dietary Fiber</b>	48 g
<b>Protein</b>	

Have you noticed all the new low-sodium items in the grocery store? There seems to be a bigger selection than ever these days.

Before you buy anything labeled “low salt” or “salt free,” the first thing you

should do is read the “Nutrition Facts” label. Look to see if potassium is listed with the other nutrients, such as sodium. If potassium is not listed, it does NOT mean the food does not contain potassium.

Second, read the ingredient list. If you see “potassium chloride” listed as an ingredient, this means the sodium has been taken out and replaced with potassium. The product may be lower in salt, but it is now loaded with potassium.

Also, pay attention to the serving size. The serving size for most canned soups is 1/2 cup. If the potassium content is 250 mg or higher per 1/2-cup serving, you should count that as a high-potassium food, such as a banana or an orange. If you are unsure about a specific product, ask your nutritionist.

Here is a recipe for a canned-soup alternative. It can also be used as a sauce for meat or pasta.

## **Quick & Easy White Sauce**

- 2 tbsp. flour
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 1 cup non-dairy creamer
- 1/4 tsp. dry mustard
- 1/4 tsp. paprika
- 1/2 tsp. parsley, basil or other fresh or dried herbs you like
- 1/2 cup cream cheese

Mix flour and butter together in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave for 30 seconds, stir, and microwave for another 30 seconds. Add milk and cream cheese, stirring to combine. Microwave one minute. Add dry mustard and herbs. Microwave another 1 to 2 minutes and stir again until desired consistency.

## **Per 1/2-cup serving:**

- Calories: 481
- Protein: 6 gm
- Carbohydrate: 22 gm
- Phosphorus: 124 mg
- Potassium: 134 mg
- Sodium: 252 mg

## **Snow, wind, ice**

Continued from page 1

Remember to follow the emergency diet if there is a chance you will not be able to receive dialysis on the normal schedule. The emergency diet is available in brochures at your unit, on our Web site: [www.nwkidney.org](http://www.nwkidney.org), or call Nutrition Services at (206) 292-2772, ext. 2000, and they can provide you with emergency diet information.

Give your NKC dialysis unit your updated phone contact information whenever it changes. Please provide us with your home, work and cell phone numbers, and an emergency-contact number that is different from your home number.

Remember, home dialysis allows you to avoid the transportation constraints of bad weather. If you'd like to look at the options of home dialysis, please call the Home Programs Educator Mary Dooley at (206) 292-2771, ext. 2057.

Please discuss these emergency preparedness steps with your dialysis unit staff. We want everyone to “Be Safe & Be Prepared!”

## Home dialysis: More energy, a better appetite and the best quality of life

By Bessie Young, MD, MPH, Home Hemodialysis Director



“This is awesome! I want the best for myself and I want to be around my family for a long time!” These are the comments of Cynthia Morales who knows what it’s like to be on dialysis. She

has been on dialysis for the last 17 years. Cynthia is now learning how to do more frequent dialysis for herself in NKC’s home hemodialysis training unit. She first found out about more frequent dialysis when she was involved in a “daily dialysis” research study. After the first few days on the daily dialysis machine during that study, Cynthia felt 100 percent better and knew she wanted to be on daily dialysis.

“I waited a year to be on the machine,” Cynthia exclaimed. I moved to a bigger house just so I could start daily dialysis.” In that regard, Cynthia has much to live for. She has three daughters, one son and a new grandson. They depend on her and want her to be around to see them grow up and go to college. Cynthia is thinking about going back to college as well. She is so excited that she can barely contain herself!

When asked about other dialysis methods or a transplant, Cynthia states that she had been on peritoneal dialysis for 12 years and recently had a transplant that failed. For her, daily dialysis has made a world of difference. She has a better appetite, her skin coloring has improved, and she has much more energy to interact with her family and pets. “Why dialyze in the center? I want to dialyze at home in my pajamas,” Cynthia said laughing.

NKC’s home hemodialysis program offers several forms of more frequent or daily dialysis. We offer short frequent and night-time dialysis. We have the NxStage System One that uses a water system and is portable. We believe that home hemodialysis offers the best quality of life and the best survival, compared to other forms of dialysis. We also believe that everyone who can be at home should be at home on more frequent hemodialysis.

“I got my life back,” Cynthia told me as she checked her blood pressure on the machine and wrote it down on her log sheet. She is taking charge of her own dialysis and doing well at it. When I asked her what she would tell other dialysis patients who are hesitant to start home hemodialysis, she declared, “Try it! You have nothing to lose and everything to gain!”

If you would like to learn more about the benefits of home dialysis, and how to gain more energy and improve your quality of life, contact our Home Programs Educator Mary



*“This is awesome! I want the best for myself and I want to be around my family for a long time,” says Cynthia Morales when speaking about frequent dialysis at home.*

## Why kidney patients need to take care of their hearts?

By Dr. Leanna Tyshler, Chronic Kidney Disease Medical Advisor



### What can you do to live longer and healthier?

This is an important question that every person on dialysis or with a kidney transplant should ask themselves. The

answer is “Take care of your heart.”

People who are treated with dialysis or a transplant don’t die from kidney failure. The major cause of death and trips to the hospital is heart and blood vessel disease, such as heart attacks, strokes, and congestive heart failure.

People with kidney disease are more likely than the general population to develop heart and blood vessel disease. They often have the major risk factors for heart disease, such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Also, other factors (gaining too much fluid in between dialysis treatments, which puts stress on the heart; high potassium, which weakens the muscles of the heart; and high sodium, which increases thirst, makes you drink more and, therefore, increases your blood pressure) contribute to developing heart complications in dialysis patients.

Now that you know why you need to pay attention to your heart, the next important question is: **Can you do anything to prevent or reduce heart and blood vessel disease?**

**The answer is “Yes.”** Simple steps can help prevent heart and blood vessel disease complications. Make sure your blood sugar and high blood pressure are controlled. Follow a healthy lifestyle: eat the right food, exercise regularly and don’t smoke.

These steps will help you live longer and healthier. Did you know that February is American Heart Month? Let’s celebrate this month by taking steps to improve our heart health.

## Just one click away

Continued from page 1

In this, NKC’s 45th year of operation, I hope the birthday present NKC gives all of us is a dedicated chronic kidney disease (CKD) research effort in collaboration with the University of Washington. We need a CKD research effort that would access National Institute of Health (NIH) funds that are available, but because of the lack of CKD research infrastructure sit unused. We need to build an infrastructure that will allow us to direct NIH research funds to the problems associated with CKD.

So what can we do? What can you do? Vote “yes.” Tell NKC that this is what we need, what we, dialyzors, want. You can do this by using the Web site [goodsearch.com](http://goodsearch.com). Each time you use this Web site to search the Internet, you raise a penny for CKD research. But more importantly, you will communicate to NKC that you, too, believe we need CKD research and that you would like NKC to lead an effort to create a dedicated non-profit CKD research effort. A research effort independent of the kidney industrial complex.

I have been part of an NKC Research Task Force for more than four years. I support the effort. Now is the time that I ask you to show your support. The penny-per-search will help, but even more importantly will be the apparent votes of confidence. Vote for NKC, vote for CKD research: select Northwest Kidney Centers as the charity that you wish to GoodSearch for!

I will continue to communicate with you about why CKD research is important to me (hint: it’s about hope), why Seattle is the place to do it (we did it before, we can do it again) and how we are doing in making this a reality (pretty good, but I ask for your help). This can happen, it will make a difference and you can be a part of it.

Hope is just a click away.

## World Kidney Day and free adult drop-in screening for your family, March 15

By Dr. Leanna Tyshler, MD, Chronic Kidney Disease Medical Advisor



Please join us in celebrating **World Kidney Day on March 8**. World Kidney Day was started in 2006 to raise chronic kidney disease awareness. As a kidney

patient you have been doing your best to deal with this difficult disease on a daily basis. Now, we ask that you help your family.

**Chronic kidney disease is common, harmful, and treatable.** But many patients with this disease don't know they have it until very late when the only treatment options are dialysis or kidney transplantation. People are at risk for CKD if they have diabetes, high blood pressure or cardiovascular disease, are older than 60, or belong to certain ethnic groups.

**Many people are at risk for CKD because of medical problems inherited from family members.** Your blood relatives may not know that they are at risk for chronic kidney disease. Well, you could change that. Take charge in teaching and encouraging your loved ones to be tested. Testing for CKD is simple and inexpensive. All that is needed is a blood pressure measurement, blood test for creatinine to estimate kidney function (eGFR) and a urine test for protein. This disease can be prevented, delayed and treated if it is detected early. Ask yourself a question **“Are your family’s kidneys OK?”**

Celebrate World Kidney Day by celebrating your family. Save your loved ones by teaching and encouraging them to get tested for chronic kidney disease. Urge them to come to our free adult drop-in health screening on **March 15** from **9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** at Northwest Kidney Center Blagg Pavilion in Lake City.

The address is 14524 Bothell Way NE, Lake Forest Park, WA 98155. If you would like more information, please call (206) 292-2771, ext. 1082.

### Dialysis unit directory

Auburn Kidney Center  
(253) 804-8323

Cascade Kidney Center  
(206) 824-9992

Elliott Bay Kidney Center  
(206) 292-2515

Haviland Kidney Center  
(206) 292-2771

Home Hemodialysis  
(206) 292-2558

Home Peritoneal Dialysis  
(206) 292-2285

Lake City Kidney Center  
(206) 365-0775

Lake Washington Kidney Center  
(425) 454-0067

Mount Rainier Kidney Center  
(425) 251-0647

Port Angeles Kidney Center  
(360) 565-1435

Scribner Kidney Center  
(206) 363-5090

Snoqualmie Ridge Kidney Center  
(425) 396-7090

Totem Lake Kidney Center  
(425) 821-8785



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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  
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## Coach's Corner

### "Guess I'll go eat worms"

By Sharon Pahlka, kidney patient and life coach



For Christmas I gave my grandson, Joshua, a set of "Wee Sing" books. I love to sing silly songs with him. We came across a

song that I liked because I remember singing one like it when I was a little girl. Want to hear it?

*Nobody likes me, everybody hates me, guess I'll go eat worms. Long thin slimy ones, short fat juicy ones, itsy bitsy, fuzzy wuzzy worms...*

As a girl, I also remember feeling sometimes that "nobody likes me, everybody hates me." I still do sometimes. It's hard to imagine a human need stronger than the need to belong. Every one of us desires warmth, companionship and someone else's heartbeat. It can be a lonely world out there when you feel like you don't belong.

Happily, you can also take steps that work better than eating worms. For one, choose what kind of friend you want to be. Are you a friend who helps, who is honest, who values and supports, who listens, who is trustworthy and committed, who gives time or who simply has fun with friends? Choose one and be that kind of friend to somebody every week. Seeing friends occasionally isn't enough. Find some exercise buddies. Meet weekly with friends. Volunteer together. Join a support group, a book group or a carpool. Find spiritual practices and gatherings you can share with others.

To belong, we need to be involved with others, which can sometimes be costly and inconvenient. But I have already decided...no worms

for me! I will be part of others' lives and belong. What will you decide?

**Coaching Question:** Where can you take action to increase belonging?

**Coaching Tip:** Let someone else be a friend to you.

**Homework:** Check your calendar, arrange some lunches, etc. Make time to see people on a regular basis as you develop a sense of belonging.

#### Quotes:

"Solitude: a good place to visit, but a poor place to stay."

-Josh Billings

"The cure for grief is motion."

-Elbert Hubbard

## Scholarships, apply now! More money offered this year

Looking to further your education or obtain job retraining? Are you interested in getting funds to further your education or complete a degree that you have put off? Then be sure to apply for our 2007 scholarship program. Applications are due by **March 30, 2007**. Up to \$3,000 (increased from \$2,000) may be awarded per year up to a maximum of \$6,000 (up from \$4,000) in scholarship money per person.

To qualify for a scholarship, you must be a current NKC dialysis patient or an NKC patient who received a kidney transplant within the last five years. You must also be a Washington State resident and 18 years of age or older. Scholarship can only be used in Washington State.

For more information and a scholarship application, contact Cheryl Lake at (206) 365-6656.

## Volunteer Profile: Lori Pena

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



*Lori Pena is a longtime kidney patient. She is a volunteer and supporter of the Northwest Kidney Centers. For the last 10 years, Lori has faithfully produced a biannual fundraiser "Hair for Care" at her salon to benefit NKC.*

Northwest Kidney Centers (NKC) has more than 300 volunteers who do many different kinds of jobs in our dialysis units and in the community. These are the amazing people who volunteer their time and energy to our staff, patients and the public. Their hard work supports NKC events and fundraising activities as well as health education and organ

donation outreach efforts. I want to introduce you to one of the people who makes important contributions to our organization.

**Lori Pena** is a longtime kidney patient. She began her journey with home hemodialysis, and continued on it for two years. Even now, she is very appreciative of her home helper, who provided invaluable assistance and care. Years later, they are still in touch. In 1991, Lori received a kidney transplant from a deceased donor. Lori wrote heartfelt letters to her donor's family right away. Unfortunately, she did not receive a reply, but her gratitude and compassion remain strong. Recently, Lori gained more insight when her own father passed on and became a cornea donor. She is extremely thankful for the precious gift that she was given 15 years ago.

Lori has been volunteering with NKC for 13 years. Staffing the outreach booth at the Puyallup Fair was her first task. It was also the first time she spoke publicly about having kidney disease. This was so significant that she saved her ticket stub as a keepsake. (And she still has it!) Soon after, Lori started volunteering at Scribner Kidney Center (SKC). There, she helped dialysis patients by getting them blankets and ice, and providing comfort and conversation during treatment. Since then, Lori has represented NKC at several health fairs and outreach events, including the SKC Open House, Northgate Mall, and the annual Polycystic Kidney Disease Walk.

Just before her kidneys failed, Lori opened Salon Pena, a hair salon in Edmonds, WA. For the last 10 years, she has faithfully produced a biannual fundraiser, "Hair for Care," at her salon. During the event, Lori and her stylists cut hair in exchange for donations to charity. In the months leading up to it, her clients receive information about NKC, organ donation and chronic kidney disease. Lori recently decided to add a personal touch. Last year marked the first time that she "outed" herself as a kidney patient to her clients. The response she received was terrific and inspiring. Impressively, Lori and her stylists have raised **\$3,900** for the NKC Foundation.

Lori is a truly dedicated volunteer, full of passion and drive. We are so grateful to know her and count her among the kidney community. Thank you, Lori, for all you have done and continue to do for Northwest Kidney Centers and your fellow kidney patients.

## “Spring to Life,” Join us on March 21

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



Are you wondering what’s happening in the field of transplantation? Curious about new research?

Want tips on talking to your friends about organ donation? There are so

many good reasons to attend NKC’s upcoming “Spring to Life” event!

Please join us for refreshments and a panel discussion. Panelists will include: a transplant surgeon, a living kidney donor, **Kami Sneddon, RN**, Clinical Transplant Coordinator at the University of Washington Medical Center; **Jan Enevoldsen**, mother of an organ donor; and **Kevin DeMahy**, kidney transplant recipient.

Date: Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Time: 6:30 – 8:30 PM

Where: NKC’s Blagg Pavilion  
14524 Bothell Way NE  
Lake Forest Park, WA 98155

This is a unique opportunity to hear personal stories from people whose lives are profoundly changed by organ donation and transplantation. Bring your family and friends. All are welcome, and this event is FREE!

Questions? Contact Syrenka Slettebak at (206) 292-2771, ext. 5355, or [syrenka@nwkidney.org](mailto:syrenka@nwkidney.org).

## Mark Your Calendar!

Saturday, May 5, 2007

### 5th Annual Kidney Health Fest for African American Families

9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the African American Academy, 8311 Beacon Ave S., Seattle. Free admission, free lunch, free health screenings, celebrity speakers, guests, and more.

Thursday May 10, 2007



### 5th Annual Breakfast of Hope

7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.  
at the Seattle Sheraton Hotel and Towers,

featuring **Isaac Hayes**, Grammy Award-winning artist, composer, actor, writer and humanitarian.



*Dialysis patient Murray McGowen was delighted to chat with Major League All-Star Jamie Moyer and his wife Karen Moyer, who were on a tour of the Northwest Kidney Centers on December 12, 2006. “The dialysis center is normally not a very exciting place, but when Jamie Moyer walked in, the place lit up,” said McGowen. “It really brightened my day and brought hope to my heart to see people of influence, like the Moyers, interested in helping others cope with a challenging disease.”*