

The Seattle Medium

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Kidney Health Fest For African American Families Educates The Community To Prevent And Treat Kidney Disease

by Seattle Medium

Northwest Kidney Centers will hold its 7th annual Kidney Health Fest for African American Families from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sat., May 2 at the African American Academy - 8311 Beacon Ave. S., in Seattle.

This free event will feature free health screenings, entertainment and healthy food samples made by local celebrity chefs. Participants also will enjoy a panel discussion on kidney health and healthy living on a shoestring, featuring Jesse Jones of KING 5 television as the emcee. The day includes music, exhibits, a fitness demonstration and obstacle course for all ages, a fun, interactive Kids' Korner, and the chance to win prizes such as iPods and an Xbox 360.

Rev. Carey G. Anderson, senior pastor at First AME Church in Seattle, will give the invocation in the morning and Rev. Aaron Williams, senior pastor at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Seattle, will offer a blessing before food is served at noon.

Special guests include King County Councilman Larry Gossett and Dr. Sandra Walker, psychiatrist at Seattle Children's Hospital, who will speak on the topic of stress. A panel discussion on health and wellness will include Dr. Rayburn Lewis, executive director and medical director of Swedish Ballard, Dr. Ben Danielson, medical director at Odessa Brown Children's Clinic, dialysis patient Forrest Woodley, and Dr. Bessie Young, medical director of Northwest Kidney Centers' home hemodialysis program, Veterans Administration nephrologist, and chair of the Fest planning committee.

Entertainment will include a visit from Seattle Seahawks mascot Blitz, the Northside Drill Team, and music by Goodybagg, Mt. Zion Baptist's New Revelation and JAM musical ensembles. VPC (Vicious Puppy Crew) break dancers will perform and KRIZ radio personalities will also be broadcasting live from the event!

The Fest is a wonderful opportunity to receive essential screenings for kidney and heart disease and to confer privately with a physician about the results—all on site and at no

charge. Northwest Kidney Centers will provide these three simple tests to assess a participant's risk of kidney disease: blood pressure check, test for protein in a urine sample, and test for creatinine in a blood sample.

There will also be glucose and blood pressure screenings for teens ages 12 to 17, and Swedish Cancer Institute's Mobile Mammography will be available for prescheduled mammograms.

One in seven American adults has kidney disease. In the African American community, the number increases four-fold. Although African Americans make up 12 percent of the U.S. population, 32 percent of individuals with kidney failure are African American. In addition, African American men are 10 to 14 times more likely to develop kidney failure due to high blood pressure than Caucasian men in the same age group.

Participants in the Kidney Health Fest will also learn how to improve their lives to avoid kidney disease. This includes treating high blood pressure and diabetes, two of the leading causes of kidney failure; quitting smoking; eating a low-salt, low-fat diet, obesity can lead to kidney disease; exercising at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week; and avoiding the overuse of pain relievers such as ibuprofen and naproxen, which can damage kidneys.

For more information about the event go to www.nwkidney.org.

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