



NORTHWEST KIDNEY CENTERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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A giant blue raindrop? No! Papa Smurf's cousin? Not him either! It's Sidney, Northwest Kidney Centers' bright blue mascot in downtown Seattle to celebrate World Kidney Day March 11

Seattle, WA (March 2, 2010): Sidney, Northwest Kidney Centers' mascot, will make an appearance at Westlake Park in downtown Seattle to greet passersby and – with helpers – educate them about kidney disease on World Kidney Day!

Sidney, a blue mascot shaped like a kidney, will be out in public from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on March 11, 2010 – celebrated globally as World Kidney Day. Sidney will greet downtown pedestrians by handing out souvenir tattoos and information about kidney disease, which affects one in seven adults. Some 80,000 Seattleites have chronic kidney disease, which often has no symptoms until very late. In Washington state, the disease affects about 886,800 people.

“The incidence of kidney disease among American adults has increased 30 percent in the past 10 years,” said Joyce Jackson, president and chief executive of Northwest Kidney Centers, the largest non-profit kidney dialysis organization serving King County. “Kidney disease is more than a personal health issue. It’s a public health issue too. Thirty percent of the country’s Medicare budget is spent treating kidney disease and 7 percent is spent on dialysis treatment. A significant portion of our public health care dollars are being spent on a disease that in many cases can be prevented.”

This year, World Kidney Day is highlighting the relationship between the global pandemic of type 2 diabetes and kidney disease. Over the past 25 years, the prevalence of type 2 diabetes in the United States has almost doubled. Diabetes is the major cause of kidney failure.

Don't miss this great visual opportunity to see Sidney in person and learn about kidney disease.

Event: Sidney, Northwest Kidney Centers' bright blue mascot, greets pedestrians in downtown Seattle for World Kidney Day. Northwest Kidney Centers' president and chief executive Joyce Jackson and vice president of development and public relations Jane Pryor will be available to answer questions.

Where? Westlake Park in downtown Seattle, 401 Pine Street

Time: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 11, 2010

Why? Why not? Sidney loves greeting people and Sidney's helpers are available to talk about how to prevent diabetes and kidney disease. Sidney is available for photos, videos, autographs or a hug.

Information on kidney disease

Preventing type 2 diabetes requires lifestyle changes. Tips to follow include:

- Treat high blood pressure and diabetes, two of leading causes of kidney failure.
- Don't smoke.
- Eat a low-salt, low-fat diet and control your weight.
- Exercise at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week.
- Don't overuse pain relievers such as ibuprofen and naproxen, which can damage kidneys.

Your doctor can run three simple tests to assess your risk:

- Check your blood pressure
- Test for protein in the urine
- Test your blood for creatinine

Ask your doctor for these tests, especially if you are in a high-risk group, which includes African Americans, Hispanics, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, people over age 60, and those with high blood pressure, diabetes or a family history of kidney disease. Early detection and treatment can help prevent the progression of kidney disease to kidney failure, which requires dialysis or a transplant to sustain life.

About Northwest Kidney Centers

The nonprofit Northwest Kidney Centers provides 80 percent of the dialysis care in King and Clallam counties, educates the public about kidney health, and collaborates with University of Washington Medicine in the Kidney Research Institute. Northwest Kidney Centers' staff of 550 delivers more than 200,000 treatments per year in 14 dialysis centers and 11 hospitals. It also maintains one of the country's largest training and support programs for people who wish to give themselves dialysis at home. Since 1962, Northwest Kidney Centers has sustained lives and inspired hope. Its mission – to promote health, independence and quality of life for people with kidney disease – remains vital today. One in seven American adults now has kidney disease, up 30 percent in the past decade. For more information, go to www.nwkidney.org.

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