

MAKE THE **GIFT** LAST



A hidden danger — leftover medications

by Tom Montemayor
Northwest Kidney Centers Pharmacy Manager



About one third of medications sold in the state of Washington are never used—that's 33 million pill bottles a year!

You might have had a new medication prescribed and are then left with partly filled bottles of old

pill. If you're like most people, you have that drawer or cupboard with medications that have been changed, stopped or expired.

Why get rid of old medications?

They're a hazard at home. Each year, thousands of children and pets are accidentally poisoned by medications. Also, you may make a mistake and grab the wrong bottle. Even in the garbage, medications can be accessible to animals and people.

They're a hazard to the environment.

If you flush medications down the toilet or put them in your garbage disposal, they get into the water system, into drinking water, and can affect fish and plant life. ▶▶▶

We can help you safely get rid of unused medications

Drop off or send your unused medications to Northwest Kidney Centers' pharmacy.

We work with a pharmaceutical disposal company to get rid of our own expired medication stock and we'll give them yours, too. They collect medications and burn them in special incinerators.

To learn more about this issue in Washington state, visit www.takebackyourmeds.org, a website by a coalition of health care organizations, pharmacies, environmental groups, and law enforcement to help tackle this health hazard. ■

Northwest Kidney Centers Pharmacy FOR KIDNEY PATIENTS

Mail order available ~ Most orders placed before 2 p.m. go out the same day!

700 Broadway, Seattle
Open 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. weekdays

To speak to a pharmacist:
Call 206-343-4870 or
Toll-free 1-800-947-8902
pharmacy@nwkidney.org





Taking your blood pressure at home

by Dr. Leanna Tyshler
Northwest Kidney Centers Transplant Liaison



Fifty to 90 percent of transplant recipients have high blood pressure, which increases the risk of heart attack, stroke, heart failure and kidney disease. People who monitor blood pressure at home have better control and that means a longer, healthier life.

Why take blood pressure at home?

- It's more accurate and reflects normal life – not the doctor's office.
- It shows how your medications are working.
- You can catch problems early. ▶▶▶

130/80: YOUR GOAL AS A KIDNEY TRANSPLANT PATIENT

	SYSTOLIC	DIASTOLIC
Normal	Less than 120	Less than 80
At risk For high blood pressure	120-139	80-89
Stage 1 High blood pressure	140-159	90-99
Stage 2 High blood pressure	160 & above	100 & above



Rest your arm on a table so the cuff is at heart level.
Read more blood pressure tips below.

Do it right! A few points up or down can mean a change in treatment, so accuracy matters.

1. Use the right size cuff. Measure your arm and check the size on the box.
2. No caffeine, alcohol or smoking 30 minutes before you check.
3. Sit quietly for 5 minutes before you check.
4. Sit with your back supported, feet flat on the floor and your arm bare.
5. Rest your arm on a table so the cuff is at heart level.
6. Place the cuff 1 to 2 inches above your elbow.
7. Line up the tubing with your middle finger.
8. Secure the cuff so that there's room to put one finger between the cuff and your arm.
9. Follow the instructions that came with your monitor to take your reading.
10. Use the arm with the highest reading.
11. Take pressure twice, 1 to 2 minutes apart.
12. Write down the average with the time of day and which arm you used. ■



'Low,' 'reduced,' 'light' sodium: What's the difference?

by Lacey Stroomer
Northwest Kidney Centers Registered Dietitian



Sodium information on food packaging can be misleading. "Low," "reduced" and "light" sodium (salt) sound good, but take a look at the nutrition label – you might be surprised! The Food and Drug Administration has rules to explain what these

key words really mean. Find out using the chart below, and remember to read the nutrition label and check serving sizes!

Reduce your risk of heart and blood disease by eating less than 2,000 mg of sodium per day. New guidelines say that 1,500 mg per day may be even better. Most Americans eat more than 4,000 mg! ■

Honey Mustard Chicken

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 tablespoons stone-ground mustard (look for a brand that has 45 mg sodium or less per teaspoon)
- 2 tablespoons honey
- Pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Mix honey and mustard together.
3. Pat the chicken breasts dry and place on a baking sheet.
4. Drizzle two-thirds of the mustard mixture over chicken. Add pepper to taste.
5. Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until juices run clear. About halfway through, turn chicken over and drizzle the rest of the mustard mixture evenly.

Nutrition Information (per chicken breast): 167 calories, 162 mg sodium, 33 g protein, 2 g carbohydrate

KEY WORDS	RULE	WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
Free	5 mg or less per serving	Some "salt free" food labels say 0 mg even though the food has up to 5 mg of sodium because they can round down.
Very low	35 mg or less per serving	Check the serving size on the nutrition label because they can sometimes be small. Servings add up quickly.
Low	140 mg or less per serving	Check the serving size. If it's 10 potato chips and you eat 30, it isn't low sodium any more.
Reduced or less	At least 25% less per serving than the cited "regular" item	If the regular item has 1000 mg of sodium the reduced will have 750 mg per serving. Often these products are still very high in sodium, since their "regular" item is extremely high in salt.
Light in sodium	At least 50% less per serving than the cited "regular" item	Check the label; sodium can still be high. For example, regular soy sauce has about 1,260 mg sodium. "Light" still has about 560 mg per serving. Check other brands. Hormel's light sodium bacon has more salt than Western Brands regular bacon!

You're invited

→ **Kidney Health Fest for African American Families**

Saturday, May 7

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Van Asselt Elementary

formerly the African American Academy

8311 Beacon Ave S., Seattle 98118

Bring your family and enjoy free health screenings, entertainment, food and prizes. All are welcome.

www.nwkidney.org/fest

→ **Breakfast of Hope**

Thursday, May 19

7:30 to 8:45 a.m.

The Westin Hotel, Seattle

Help support life-sustaining dialysis care and the expansion of Northwest Kidney Centers' renal pharmacy.

Suggested donation: \$150

www.nwkidney.org/breakfast

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You've got trouble on your hands

Eighty percent of all infections are transmitted by touch. As a transplant patient, you have an immune system that is suppressed and your risk of infection is higher. **Infection is the second leading cause of death for transplant patients.** Simple hand washing is one of the best ways to protect yourself.

When to wash your hands:

- After using the bathroom
- Before and after eating and preparing food
- After touching animals
- Throughout your day. Think of all the things you touch that have been touched by others (doorknobs, handrails, shopping carts, money, phones, keypads, etc.).

How to wash your hands:

- Use liquid soap.
(Some germs can live on bar soap.)

- Scrub for 20 seconds.
(Sing "Happy Birthday" twice.)
- Scrub fingertips and between fingers.
- Use paper towels to dry.
- Use a paper towel to turn off the faucet.

Use hand sanitizer:

- Use an amount about the size of a nickel.
- Rub hands all over until dry.
- Choose brands that are at least 60% alcohol.
- Keep hand sanitizer with you, in your car and at work.

Keep skin moisturized:

- Rough, dry skin traps and holds germs.
- Lotion helps to prevent cracks in skin where germs can get in. ■