

## Paying for dialysis care

Financial case managers are here to help with your health insurance coverage

Did you know you have a financial case manager? That staff member is dedicated to helping you get, maintain and update insurance coverage so you can focus on improving your health.

Your financial case manager reviews your insurance status from time to time and will contact you for updates to your financial situation.

### Please contact your financial case manager if:

- Your job status or your spouse's job status changes
- Your insurance or your spouse's insurance changes
- You need help understanding communications from your insurer
- You are having trouble paying your insurance premiums
- You are having trouble paying for dialysis or medications

See the column at right for contact information. If you are unsure who your financial case manager is, call 206-292-2771 and ask for the patient financial case manager on call.



Betty and Dionisio Garcia both get dialysis at Northwest Kidney Centers Lake Washington in Bellevue.

## Northwest Kidney Centers financial case managers

Aletha White: 206-720-3770

Anthony Moore: 206-720-3768

Mary Grennan: 206-720-3767

Sonia Edmondson: 206-720-3766

## Coming soon: Washington Healthplanfinder

[www.WAHealthPlanFinder.org](http://www.WAHealthPlanFinder.org)

Get online information about affordable, quality health coverage starting Oct. 1. Compare plans side-by-side based on price, benefits, quality and other features before you make a choice. Open enrollment runs Oct. 1, 2013-March 31, 2014.

The new website and insurance options listed there are our state's response to the federal Affordable Care Act, or health care reform.

**If you are currently uninsured** or need more comprehensive coverage, your financial case manager can help you understand your choices and help you submit an application through the Washington state insurance exchange.

**If you are on Medicare or Medicaid**, you will likely see little change in your dialysis coverage.

# Explore other treatment options – we've got classes to help



Mong Berkowitz, patient at Renton

## Is home dialysis right for you?

Home dialysis is a great way to gain independence and flexibility. You're in charge of your treatments and you don't have to work around a clinic's schedule. You can eat a more normal diet. Most people enjoy better health and quality of life when they dialyze at home.

Our staff will be there every step of the way to help you set up and get comfortable doing your own treatments.

### Attend a free Next Step class to see if home dialysis might be right for your lifestyle.

Northwest Kidney Centers Seattle  
548 15th Ave., 4th Floor

Second Wednesday every month: **Aug. 14, Sept. 11, Oct. 9**  
Fourth Thursday of even months: **Aug. 22, Oct. 24**

Northwest Kidney Centers Renton  
602 Oakesdale Ave. SW

Fourth Wednesday of even months: **Aug. 28, Oct. 23**  
Fourth Thursday of odd months: **Sept. 26**

**9 a.m., home hemodialysis classes**

**10 a.m., peritoneal dialysis classes**

To find out more or to register, contact:

**Home hemodialysis: 206-292-2558 or 1-877-216-2558**

**Peritoneal dialysis: 206-292-2285 or 1-877-292-2285**

## Is a kidney transplant right for you?

Our new, free Next Step Transplant class will tell you all about the transplant process: the evaluation to qualify, living donor and deceased donor transplants, the transplant waitlist, and how to live well with a transplant.

**Thursday, Aug. 29, 10-11:30 a.m.**

Haviland Pavilion  
700 Broadway, Seattle

**Monday, Sept. 23, 3-4:30 p.m.**

SeaTac Pavilion  
17900 International Blvd. S., SeaTac

Classes are held monthly, alternating between Northwest Kidney Centers Haviland Pavilion and SeaTac Pavilion.

**To sign up or for more information, call 206-292-2771, ext. 1082.**

Visit [www.nwkidney.org](http://www.nwkidney.org)  
to see all our classes.



## Lend a hand to explain the dialysis diet

by Katy Wilkens, MS, RD  
Nutrition and fitness manager

Use your hand to explain your daily dialysis diet to friends and family.



**Your thumb:** Equivalent to an ounce. Each day you need one ounce of animal protein for every 10 kilograms you weigh – if you weigh 80 kilograms, eat 8 ounces of protein daily.



**Your palm:** About the size of a serving of protein, 3 or 4 ounces. Every day, eat at least two palm-sized servings of meat, fish, poultry or eggs.



**Your fist:** Rather than keeping track of which foods are high and low in potassium, use this trick: limit fruits and vegetables to servings about the size of three fists each day, and don't eat the same food more than once a day.



**Your index finger:** Point your index finger to make the number one. That's how many servings of dairy you should have in a day. One serving is an 8-ounce glass of milk or 2 ounces of cheese. (Remember: your thumb is an ounce, or half a serving of cheese.)



**A pinch:** Pinch your thumb and index finger together. That's how little salt we need in a day, on or off dialysis. Cook from scratch and avoid packaged, processed and prepared foods to limit your sodium intake.



**An extra hand:** Your Northwest Kidney Centers dietitian is your very own food consultant.  
Your dietitian:

- Reviews your laboratory values each month and suggests food choices to support your health and lifestyle.
- Will talk with your friends, family, and caregivers about healthy foods for you.

## Respect and caring rate high in our patient experience survey

Our annual patient experience survey is coming in September. Watch for the form in your mail. Last year, a survey company mailed the form to 1,170 in-center patients and 49.3 percent responded. Thank you so much to those who took part.

- “Overall ratings” for kidney doctors, dialysis staff and dialysis centers averaged 8.66 to 8.90 (10 possible points).
- For “nephrologist communication and caring” and “quality of dialysis center care and operations” scores averaged 3.41 to 3.60 (4 possible points).
- 80 percent of patients answered “yes” about getting information from staff on many topics important to their care.

We learned that you were most likely to find your experience with us to be positive if you agreed that:

- Staff showed respect for what patients had to say, and
- Staff really cared about you as a person.

If your dialysis center ranked below the whole organization's average, we will develop an action plan to improve. Northwest Kidney Centers will work on improving the way we handle problems, talking to you about peritoneal dialysis, and talking about what you should eat and drink.

Call your dietitian when you have a question, or contact the nutrition and fitness department at 206-729-3990.



## A cooking class for you: tasty picnics

Saturday, Aug. 10  
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Northwest Kidney Centers  
T. Evans & Ann P. Wyckoff  
Demonstration Kitchen  
700 Broadway, Seattle

Join our dietitians as they cook up portable foods you can make for your next picnic in the park. Cost is \$5. Scholarships available.

### ✉ **RSVP**

katie.huff@nwkidney.org  
or 206-720-3990



[www.nwkidney.org](http://www.nwkidney.org)  
[pr@nwkidney.org](mailto:pr@nwkidney.org)  
206-292-2771



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Northwest Kidney Centers promotes the optimal health, quality of life and independence of people with kidney disease through patient care, education and research.



NORTHWEST

**Kidney Centers**

700 Broadway • Seattle WA 98122

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Carolyn Harper-Brown washes her hands before doing peritoneal dialysis.

Infection means germs are attacking your body. Infection can cause serious illness and death – it is the second leading cause of death for dialysis patients.

#### **To keep yourself safe from germs:**

1. Use hand sanitizer when you enter and leave the dialysis clinic.
2. Wash your hands and your access arm before going on dialysis.
3. Keep your vaccines up to date. They help your body build up protection from infection. Ask your doctor what you need. Get a free flu vaccine at your unit starting Sept. 16.
4. Frequently wash blankets, pillows and other items you use often. Use bleach if there are blood stains.
5. Notify your clinic or doctor if you notice redness, swelling, or pus oozing from the access exit site area.

## Get your prescriptions filled at our pharmacy

Friendly service • Expert consultation • Free delivery

206-343-4870 • 700 Broadway • [pharmacy@nwkidney.org](mailto:pharmacy@nwkidney.org)