

Zap those germs: keep yourself safe from infections

Infection happens when germs are attacking your body, which can't fight back well because you have kidney disease. Infection can lead to serious illness and death. In fact, it's the second leading cause of death for dialysis patients.

Northwest Kidney Centers is committed to preventing infections. For example, we discourage use of catheters for hemodialysis because they are more prone to infections than a graft or a fistula. And we encourage all patients and staff members to get the flu vaccine each year.

Handwashing tips

- Use liquid antibacterial soap in the original container. Germs can live on bar soap.
- Scrub for 30 seconds.
- Scrub fingers, around nails and between fingers.
- Dry well with paper towels. Germs like dampness.

Prevent dry skin

- Use lotion to keep your hands from getting too dry. Rough, dry skin traps and holds germs more than smooth skin does.



Peritoneal dialysis patient Karlien Greeff washes her hands before her treatment.

More steps to keep germs away

- 1 Use hand sanitizer when you enter and leave the dialysis clinic. Look for the purple hands on signs pointing out each sanitizing station.
- 2 Wash your hands and access arm before going on dialysis. Hands carry thousands of germs.
- 3 Keep vaccines up to date. They help your body build up protection from infection. Ask your doctor what you need. Get a free flu shot at your clinic starting in September.
- 4 Frequently wash blankets, pillows and other items you use often. Use bleach if there are blood stains.
- 5 Notify your clinic and doctor if you notice redness, swelling or pus oozing from your access exit site area.

HOPEline is here for you if you need to talk

If you, family members or caregivers have questions relating to chronic kidney disease, call the Renal Support Network's peer support phone line, HOPEline. Connect with and get support from someone who has been there, and can share experience, strength and hope with you.

Call the HOPEline

Toll-free 800-579-1970

Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Kidney disease runs in families

One of the biggest risk factors for kidney failure is having a family member with kidney disease. Leading causes such as diabetes and high blood pressure run in families, and certain ethnic groups, such as African Americans, Asians, Hispanics, Pacific Islanders and Native Americans, are at even higher risk.

Protect your family. Have your relatives talk to their doctors about their kidney disease risk. They can get screened with these simple tests:

- ✓ **Blood pressure check**
- ✓ **Test for protein in the urine**
- ✓ **Blood test for creatinine**

Are you ready for home dialysis or a transplant? Find out at one of our free classes



Former Rennton dialysis patient Victor Kobuki received his kidney transplant in June 2014.

There's no place like home: home dialysis offers many benefits

On home dialysis, you're in charge of your treatments. You don't have to work around a clinic's schedule or worry about bad weather making it hard to get to your appointment on time. You gain independence and flexibility, and you can eat a more normal diet.

A Next Step Home Hemodialysis or Next Step PD class can tell you more.

Is it time for a new kidney?

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

Visit www.nwkidney.org to see a list of all our upcoming free classes.

Don't get beat by the heat: watch your fluid gains

Warmer days can cause dehydration and make you very thirsty. Be careful with how much you drink this summer. Too much can push you over your recommended daily fluid allowance and cause complications. Excess fluid that builds up in your body between dialysis treatments can:

- Cause swelling, which will increase your blood pressure and stress your heart
- Collect in your lungs, making it hard to breathe

It is normal to gain weight from extra fluid building up in your body between dialysis treatments, but a gain of more than 2 to 3 kilograms, depending on body size, can be an issue. When your care team pulls off a large fluid gain at once during a dialysis treatment, you may get muscle cramps, headaches and nausea. You might even need an extra dialysis session to remove excess fluid.



Kirkland patient Benjamin Reali and his wife, Renate, enjoy water on a hot day. Drink cold beverages to slow your fluid intake.

How much fluid is good for you?

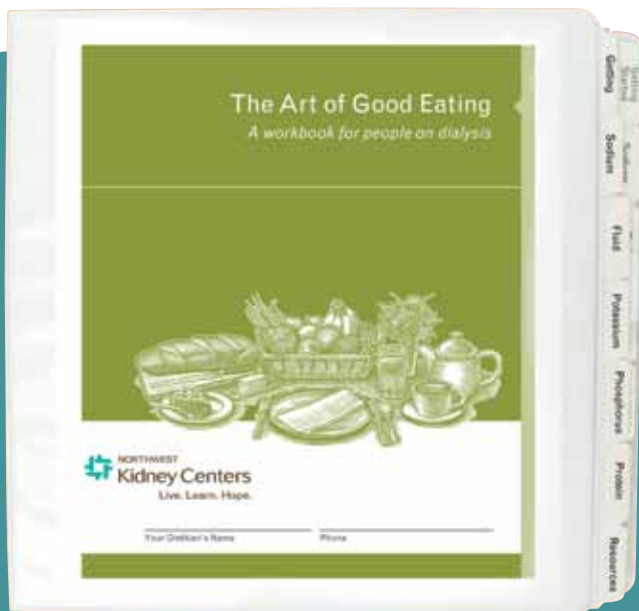
That depends on your urine output, dry weight and how long and how often you dialyze.

If you're unsure about your fluid allowance, ask your dietitian or nurse.

Beware of salt

Avoid salt, which makes you feel thirsty and can contribute to fluid weight gains.

Watch your fluid intake to stay comfortable and healthy this summer.



Workbook to help you eat well

Thanks to gifts at last year's Breakfast of Hope fundraising event, we've revised our classic nutrition workbook, "The Art of Good Eating." First published 32 years ago, the book provides nutrition guidance and will help you develop skills to plan meals and live well. The new edition is in full color, organized into sections by nutritional topic, and includes photographs of patients. If you haven't already received a copy, you will get it from your dietitian during your next annual comprehensive assessment and plan of care.



Did you know? Many laxatives contain magnesium and aluminum, which can build up to toxic levels in people on dialysis. Our specialty renal pharmacy can check for potentially harmful ingredients in your medications.

Get all your prescriptions from Northwest Kidney Centers

Take advantage of expert consultation, easy ordering and free delivery.

Phone: 206-343-4870

Toll-free: 800-947-8902

pharmacy@nwkidney.org



www.nwkidney.org
pr@nwkidney.org
206-292-2771



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Pharmacy: 206-343-4870 or 1-800-947-8902

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



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Get involved in kidney research



As a patient at Northwest Kidney Centers, you have the opportunity to join the Kidney Research Institute's registry. The registry is a list of people and health histories that researchers consult first when they need subjects for an upcoming study on kidney problems or dialysis. Having a registry helps recruit participants for studies more quickly and keeps groundbreaking research moving.

A total of 567 Northwest Kidney Centers patients have already agreed to be part of the registry. Won't you join them? Ask your nursing care manager about enrolling in the registry.

The Kidney Research Institute, a collaboration between Northwest Kidney Centers and UW Medicine, is dedicated to improving the lives of people with kidney disease. Since it opened in 2008, the Kidney Research Institute has worked with more than 2,000 people with kidney disease in over 50 clinical studies, and it has produced over 500 scientific publications.