

# Home Connection

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## Use the patient portal to log treatments and communicate with our staff



Visit **[www.nwkidney.org](http://www.nwkidney.org)** and click My Northwest Kidney Centers to access the patient portal.

**Record treatments.** The portal allows you to create daily dialysis logs online, track your dialysis and view your treatment history. Staff members check your logs daily to make sure you are dialyzing safely and as prescribed. It's important for you fill out your treatment logs completely and accurately each day, online or on paper.

**Communicate with your care team.** Read all your Northwest Kidney Centers emails in one convenient location through the online portal. When you receive a message from us, you'll get an alert to your personal email account notifying you to log in to our secure site.

Send emails to your kidney care team using the handy drop-down menu which allows you to select your email recipient — no need to remember email addresses or names. If you have an urgent matter, please call your care team directly.



PD patient Alan Hoshino adds an entry to his dialysis log online.

## Protect yourself from infection



Keep your vaccines up to date. With kidney disease, your body can't fight back well against germs. Vaccines will help your body build up protection from infection. Ask your doctor what you need.

### Northwest Kidney Centers provides vaccines for:

- Annual flu protection - this year's flu vaccine will be offered starting in September.
- Hepatitis B
- Streptococcus pneumonia

Get your vaccines up to date during your next clinic visit. If you get a vaccine somewhere besides Northwest Kidney Centers, let us know so we can note it in your file.



# An on-call nurse is always available



You can reach an on-call nurse by phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in case you encounter problems while dialyzing. Catching a problem early could save you from becoming ill or needing hospitalization.

**HH** If you're a home hemodialysis patient, contact the on-call nurse immediately if you have an alarm you cannot resolve, in order to keep from losing blood. If you lose a circuit of blood, let us know right away. We will ask you to recheck your hemoglobin, and we will notify your doctor.

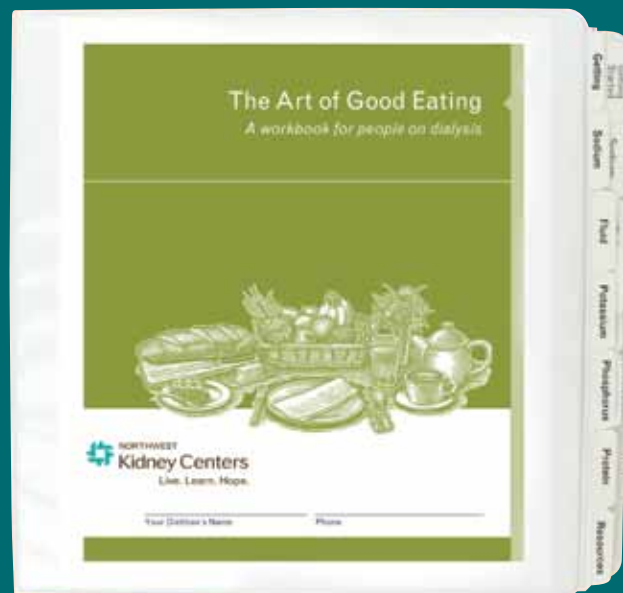
**Northwest Kidney Centers home hemodialysis unit:** 206-292-2558 or 1-877-216-2558

**PD** **Northwest Kidney Centers peritoneal dialysis unit:** 206-292-2285 or 1-877-216-2285

If you are calling after hours, tell the operator you are a home dialysis patient and ask to speak to the nurse on call. Let them know if you are dialyzing at the time. Give your name and your phone number. You will be connected directly to the on-call nurse, or you will receive a call back within 15 minutes.



Anna Aslanidi is one of our home hemodialysis nurses.



## Workbook to help you eat well

Last year's Breakfast of Hope raised funds to help revise Northwest Kidney Centers' 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.

# Kidney disease and sexuality



**Kidney disease can affect your sexuality. Sexuality issues are common for kidney disease patients:**

- Concerns about attractiveness
- Decreased desire
- Lower energy levels
- Changes in sexual function such as trouble having an orgasm, difficulty getting an erection for men, and sexual pain for women

**Causes of these issues are physical and emotional:**

- Irregular sleep
- Depression and anxiety
- Body image
- Physical discomfort
- Fatigue
- Hormone imbalance
- Side effects of medications

**Don't be afraid to ask questions or get help from your social worker or doctor. They have helped other people with similar problems, and they are here to help you live your life to the fullest.**



**Many of these problems can be treated.**

- Let your partner know how you feel, and that your lack of desire does not mean you no longer care. Open communication is key to understanding and intimacy.
- Remember that sexuality isn't all about intercourse. Activities such as touching, hugging and kissing can provide feelings of warmth and intimacy as well.
- Physical exercise, sleep and relaxation techniques can improve your body image and energy levels.
- Medications (such as antidepressants) or therapy may be appropriate.

## Free resources to help you live well with kidney disease

**Kidney School** – a free, online education program covering topics such as living successfully with kidney disease, treatment choices, coping, labs, diet, sexuality, etc. [www.kidneyschool.org/mods/](http://www.kidneyschool.org/mods/)

**Kidney Living magazine** – National Kidney Foundation's free magazine for dialysis patients, featuring stories from people who are living well on dialysis, tips for living with kidney disease, healthy eating, finding support, and more.

Subscribe at [www.kidney.org/patients/KidneyLiving](http://www.kidney.org/patients/KidneyLiving).

**HOPEline** – Renal Support Network's peer support phone line can answer questions relating to chronic kidney disease you, your family members or care givers may have. Call toll-free 800-579-1970, Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., to talk to someone who has been there and can share experience, strength and hope with you.



## Did you know?

Many laxatives contain magnesium and aluminum, which can build up to toxic levels in people on dialysis. That's one reason it's so important to have a specialty renal pharmacy that can check for potentially harmful ingredients in your medications.

### Get all your prescriptions at our specialty renal pharmacy

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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Hear the latest news as it happens!

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



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

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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## Are you ready for a kidney transplant?



Do you wonder what life might be like without dialysis? Find out if a kidney transplant is right for you, and the steps involved. Our free Next Step Transplant class will tell you all about:

- The transplant evaluation process and waitlist
- Living donor and deceased donor transplants
- Transplant surgery
- How to live well after transplant

**Upcoming classes: Sept. 9, Sept. 17, Oct. 10**

**Visit [www.nwkidney.org](http://www.nwkidney.org) for full class information, or call 202-292-2771, ext. 1082.**



Rich Bloch did home hemodialysis until his transplant in November 2013.