


Home Connection

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Avoiding constipation

A high-fiber diet can help you avoid constipation. For dialysis patients, constipation is common and can become serious.

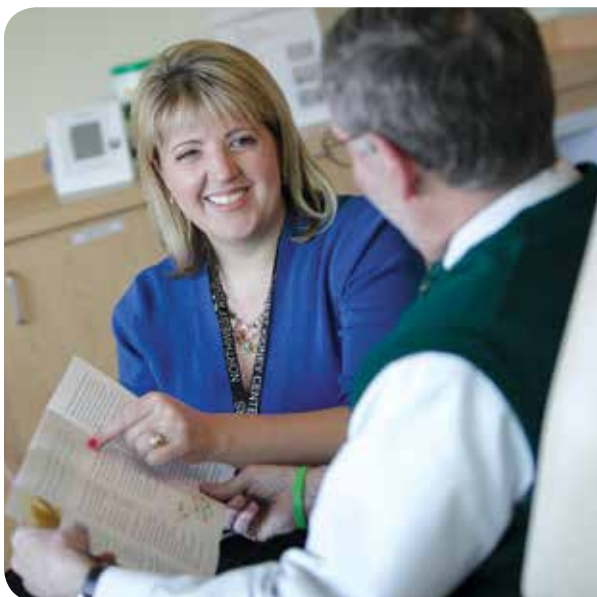
 If you are on peritoneal dialysis, constipation and irregular bowel movements make it harder to do your exchanges, and the treatment may be less effective.

Fiber helps make your stools softer and easier to pass. If you haven't been getting enough fiber, increase gradually – too much too fast can cause bloating, cramping and gas.

Foods with lots of fiber

- Fruits and vegetables such as apples, berries, oranges, broccoli, carrots and lettuce
- Raw bran and whole grains such as barley, bulgur wheat, corn, millet, quinoa and brown rice
- Legumes and dried peas and beans such as pinto, navy and garbanzo

Some fruits and vegetables are high in phosphorus and potassium. Check with your dietitian about the right amounts for you. Find high-fiber recipes at www.nwkidney.org.



Beth Shanaman is part of Northwest Kidney Centers' team of registered dietitians. They can help you avoid and relieve constipation.

Other keys to staying regular

Along with a high-fiber diet, these activities can help.

Daily exercise

Physical activity increases blood flow as well as the muscle tone in your intestines. Regular exercise will make it easier to have regular bowel movements. A daily walk, a stretching routine or even light housework can make a difference.

Bathroom routine

Spend some time in the bathroom every day around the same time. Pay attention to your body and don't resist the urge to have a bowel movement. Ask your doctor about laxatives or stool softeners.

Signs of constipation

- Lack of daily bowel movement
- Hard stools more than 25 percent of the time
- Straining during bowel movements more than 25 percent of the time

Your health care team is ready to help with constipation issues.

Too much phosphorus?



Normal kidneys get rid of most phosphorus through urine, but that doesn't happen as kidneys fail.

Your body needs phosphorus for strong bones and working nerves and muscles, but too much is not good. Excess phosphorus causes itching, damages arteries and blood vessels and may lead to heart disease and amputations. Lowering phosphorus slows the progress of kidney disease, bone disorders and heart problems.

How much is too much?

A low-phosphorus diet ranges from 800 to 1,200 milligrams daily, depending on your protein needs. Check with your dietitian about a good goal for you.

How to control your phosphorus:

- 1) **Dialysis.** Do your treatments regularly, for the entire time. Dialysis removes about half the phosphorus you eat.
- 2) **Diet.** Limit high-phosphorus foods. High-protein foods also contain phosphorus, so check with your dietitian.
- 3) **Binders.** Take binders any time you eat. They keep the phosphorus in your food from going into your blood. If you have trouble taking them, talk with your doctor about different types. If you can't afford binders, talk with your patient finance counselor.

High-phosphorus foods

Limit or avoid these foods:

- Prepared/processed food: hot dogs, macaroni and cheese, pizza, lunch meat, breaded chicken and breakfast sandwiches
- Breads/cereals/grains: biscuits, cornbread, bran cereal, pancakes and oatmeal
- Dairy: cheese, milk, ice cream and vanilla pudding
- Desserts/snacks: cheese puffs, peanuts, chips and yellow cake



Former peritoneal dialysis patient Larry Epley at his Vashon Island home. Larry received a transplant earlier this year.



Is a kidney transplant your next step?

Our free Next Step Transplant class can help you find out if a kidney transplant is right for you. The class covers:

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

Visit www.nwkidney.org for a class schedule.

Patient perspectives: Increasing your physical activity



Fatima Valentine, a PD patient from Des Moines, was active prior to kidney failure in 2015. Being active is still the only way she knows how to be.

“*I like to say that exercise is like an investment: it takes some energy to start, but you end up with more energy at the end of the activity.*

Start small. Do things like walk around the block (pick a nice day), take the stairs instead of the elevator, park your car further away from stores or get a friend or a dog to motivate you. Do something. Start with what you can do and expand from there.”

“*First, make sure your doctor says it's OK. When you start, your body has to re-acclimate itself to being active. Be consistent — you'll get stronger slowly but steadily. Make sure you know your limitations. You will get past the fatigue. Then you can get back to activities you enjoy.*

A support group or talking with a close friend helps. Without support, you are a lone ranger.”



José Salas is an avid tennis player and PD patient from Covington. He credits encouragement from others for helping him return to the activity he loves.

Hand hygiene: Gel in and gel out



Remember to gel in and gel out when you come for clinic. Using hand gel is the single best thing you can do to reduce infections.

Use hand gel when your hands are not visibly soiled. Be sure that the gel covers all surfaces of your hands, especially under the nails. Let the gel dry before you touch anything.

If hands are soiled, always wash with soap and water for at least 30 seconds or long enough to sing “Happy Birthday” twice.

Join the Kidney Research Institute registry



You can support research into kidney disease by joining the Kidney Research Institute's registry, a list of people interested in participating in research on kidney problems or dialysis.

When scientists need people with conditions like yours, a research coordinator will come to your clinic to tell you about the study and ask if you want to participate. Many studies take only a few minutes, either before or after your treatment.

Ask your nurse care manager about joining the 600 Northwest Kidney Centers patients already on the list.



Making sense of those meds

Our pharmacy experts are here for you.

Our pharmacists work with your health care team to track your medications. They'll help you understand the best time to take certain meds, make sure medicines prescribed are OK to take together and help find solutions if you're unable to pay. Once you're set up, you can even refill a prescription online.

Questions? Go to nwkidney.org/pharmacy or call 206-343-4870 or 800-947-8902.



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



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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.



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Shake the salt — reset your taste buds

Did you know changes in our diet can change our taste buds? It takes just weeks.

When we eat a diet that's high in salt, we become less sensitive to the taste. This makes us end up eating more and more salty foods without noticing how salty they are.

Luckily our taste buds respond the same way to the absence of salt.

When we stop eating salty prepared, packaged, processed and restaurant food, our taste buds become more sensitive to salt. We begin to prefer more subtle tastes as our tongue and taste buds regain sensitivity.

It takes about three weeks without eating salty foods before your taste buds reset. The longer you stick to a low-salt diet, the more likely you are to enjoy it. And that enjoyment will increase over time.

