

# Home Connection

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## How well is dialysis working?




### Understanding adequacy

Adequacy is a measure of how well dialysis removes waste from your body. If you have good adequacy you feel better, live longer and have less chance of infection. How well dialysis works can change, so we measure adequacy often.

#### Know your numbers

 Kt/V and creatinine clearance tests measure adequacy. In Kt/V tests, your goal is 2.0 or higher.

 The Kt/V test measures adequacy. If you dialyze three times a week or less, your goal is 1.4 or higher. If you dialyze more than three times a week, your goal is 2.0 or higher.

If your numbers are too low, you're not getting enough dialysis (called uremia). You might have little appetite and feel tired, weak and itchy. Discuss with your nurse – you might feel better with more dialysis.




Kidney disease can run in families. Richard Allen Durden used home hemodialysis before his kidney transplant in 2010. His mom, Velma Durden, gets dialysis at our Renton clinic.

## Bon voyage!




### Get packing, but plan before you do

If you're planning a trip, start early. Order supplies at least 60 days before you go.

 NxStage will ship cartridges, dialysate bags and warmer bags (you bring the rest!) for trips within the continental U.S. To arrange for NxStage to ship the supplies, tell your unit manager your travel dates, address where you're staying and the amounts you need. We will give you a letter of medical necessity and a supply list to check off so you don't forget anything.

**→ TIP: Ask for a travel case if you need it – we loan them on a first come, first served basis.**

 Talk to your nurse about supplies needed for your trip. Call Baxter to place your travel order. When you call, tell them your travel dates, where you're staying and the supplies you need.

**→ TIP: Order wisely—Baxter won't pick up extra supplies.**

# Perfect potassium

## Tips for getting the potassium you need

Potassium, a mineral found in most foods, helps your body's muscles and nerves work. Because you have frequent dialysis treatments, your potassium level may get too low, affecting your heart.

On the other hand, you might have high potassium if you don't dialyze enough or if your hemo access or PD catheter is not working well.

Adjust your diet to keep potassium levels between 3.5 and 5.5.

### Signs of low or high potassium

- Unable to move your arms or legs
- Weakness, tiredness and confusion
- Numbness or tingling
- Nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, diarrhea, constipation
- Irregular heartbeat

**If you have these signs, call your doctor or 911 immediately.**



Cindy Turner likes the portability of peritoneal dialysis. It lets her do an exchange at her office.

### How much potassium?

If you're on frequent dialysis, you need 3,000 to 4,000 milligrams of potassium each day. Eat the foods below to help reach that level.

**Fruits and veggies.** Eating five servings of fruits and veggies every day can help you get the potassium you need.

**Dairy and shakes.** Boost your potassium intake with 1 cup of milk and nutrition shakes like Ensure Plus, Boost Plus and Slim Fast. All these foods contain phosphorus as well, so have just one dairy food a day.

**Salt substitutes.** Home dialysis users can have a maximum of  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon a day (equal to two high-potassium servings) of salt substitutes.

## Scrumptious smoothies HH PD

Looking for a quick and easy way to add potassium and protein to your diet? Try a smoothie!



**Strawberry banana:** Blend 1 cup apple juice,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup plain yogurt, 8 frozen strawberries and one frozen banana.

**Tropical dream:** Blend  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup orange juice,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup pineapple juice, 1 cup frozen pineapple chunks,  $\frac{1}{2}$  frozen banana.

**Mango mix-up:** Blend one cup pineapple juice,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup orange juice, 1 cup frozen mango chunks, 1 cup frozen blueberries.

→ **TIP:** To add extra protein, mix in two scoops of unflavored protein powder. Each recipe makes two servings.



Shab Jessa was husband Andy's care partner in home hemodialysis until his transplant in 2013.

## Lean on us



### Your home support team

Dialysis can be tough. But you're not alone. Your Northwest Kidney Centers care team is here to make sure you enjoy optimal health, quality of life and independence.

**Nephrologist.** Recommends the best treatment plan for you, monitors your labs closely and suggests adjustments as needed.

**Care manager.** Your home nurse is an expert in home dialysis. Your nurse will train you, see you at in-center checkups and answer questions.

**Dietitian.** A large part of feeling good on dialysis comes from your kidney diet. Your dietitian helps you understand what foods work for you, and shares tasty, kidney-friendly recipes.

**Social worker.** Adjusting to dialysis can be a challenge. Your social worker will put you in touch with support groups and other resources.

**Financial case manager.** A financial specialist can help explain insurance coverage and talk through payment options with you.

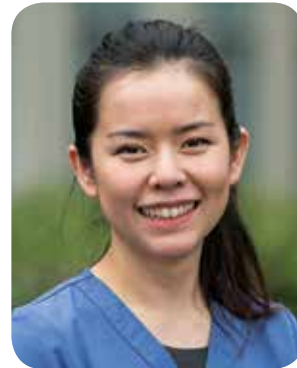
**Kidney pharmacists.** Keep track of all your medications, making sure they are OK to take all together.

And of course the people in your everyday life are rooting for your success. Turn to your care partner, family and friends when you need a boost.

## New nurses on the home team



We're happy to welcome four registered nurses to help with your home dialysis: Mali Tran joins the home hemo team, and May Dela Cruz, Camila Jurao and Elizabeth Smith join the PD department.



Mali Tran



May Dela Cruz



Camila Jurao



Elizabeth Smith



## Next up: a transplant?

See if a different treatment option is right for you—attend a Next Step class to learn about transplant, home hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis. Go to [nwkidney.org/classes](http://nwkidney.org/classes) for full class descriptions and a time and location convenient for you.





# Making sense of those meds

Our pharmacy experts are here for you

Our kidney 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](http://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



**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

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# CEREMONY *of* REMEMBRANCE

Saturday, April 2, 2016 10-11 a.m.

Northwest Kidney Centers SeaTac Pavilion

17900 International Blvd. S., SeaTac

The Ceremony of Remembrance is an opportunity for those who have lost a loved one to unite in a morning of reflection. Celebrate the life of the person you have lost with others who share your experience.

Everyone is welcome. If you wish, bring a small memento of your loved one for display during the service.

**Questions? Contact Dianna Cox, Northwest Kidney Centers chaplain, at 206-720-3952 or [dianna.cox@nwkidney.org](mailto:dianna.cox@nwkidney.org).**