

Home Connection

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Be winter ready



Have emergency diet food at home to help you survive in case you are unable to do treatments. Ask your dietitian for a list.

Always have a week's supply of medications.

HH If you are on home hemo, keep kayexalate at home to help get rid of potassium that builds up when you miss dialysis.

Keep a list of contact information for your health care providers, friends and relatives. Be sure your home dialysis unit has three different ways to reach you.

Make an emergency supply kit. See column at right.

Check weather reports. Dialyze early if there may be a power outage. Charge your phone battery.

Have extra dialysis supplies in case of a delivery delay. Watch expiration dates so supplies don't go bad. Make sure supplies aren't frozen. If something doesn't look right, call your nurse.

Have backup travel plans to get to appointments or backup runs in case there is a power outage. For more details, see sidebar.

Emergency kit



- Paper or plastic plates, cups, bowls, eating utensils
- Non-electric can opener
- Aluminum foil
- Battery-operated radio
- Flashlight and batteries
- Candles and matches in waterproof container
- First aid kit
- Sharp knife and scissors
- Paper towels
- Baby or sanitary wipes
- Garbage bags
- Distilled water (one gallon per person)
- Bleach and eyedropper to purify water (16 drops per gallon of water)

If you lose power...

- PD** Notify your nurse by the next day. If you do APD, you can dialyze with manual (CAPD) exchanges the next day. If you do CAPD, contact your nurse for ideas for heating your bags of dialysate.
- HH** You can wait until power is restored and run the next day, call your home unit to set up an in-center backup run, or take your NxStage machine to a location that has power and run on bags.

In case power goes off in the middle of a run, have your flashlight ready to perform procedures for manual rinseback.



Larry Epley used to commute from his Vashon Island home to our West Seattle clinic for dialysis. He has more time for other things now that he does peritoneal dialysis at home.



Is it time to HH PD have your home environment reassessed?

Our staff can do home visits to check your setup

Recently retired dentist Ken Hamada does home hemodialysis treatments at his home in Shoreline.

Our nurses assessed your home dialysis setup when you first started doing self-treatments. Is it time for another look? Our trained staff will double-check to be sure you have the proper environment and procedures to stay healthy.

A home visit lasts one to two hours.

The evaluation includes:

- ✔ Treatment location and setup assessment
- ✔ Supply inventory
- ✔ Medical equipment check
- ✔ Procedure and technique review

We will make a home visit:

- PD
 - If you change from CAPD to APD
 - As needed after an infection incident, or if anything changes in your physical condition
 - If you move
- HH
 - Annually when we collect water samples to assess trace elements for NxStage PureFlow users
 - After an infection incident, or if anything changes in your physical condition
 - If you move
 - As needed



Too much phosphorus can be a serious issue

Phosphorus and calcium are minerals in food that your body needs for strong bones and working nerves and muscles. They have a “seesaw” relationship: when one goes up, the other goes down. Kidneys help balance these minerals. When your kidneys fail, phosphorus can build up in the blood, causing your calcium level to drop.

Too much phosphorus can lead to:

- Weak bones
- Damaged arteries and blood vessels, causing heart disease
- Itching and skin wounds

3 ways to keep your phosphorus in check:

- 1 Phosphorus binders.** Take these pills when you eat. They stop the phosphorus in your food from going into your blood.
- 2 Diet.** Limit your intake of high-phosphorus foods. Choose rice, soy or almond milk instead of cow’s milk, avoid enriched milk substitutes and check labels for the letters “phos” in ingredients. Ask your dietitian for a Northwest Kidney Centers phosphorus brochure, which has a list of low- and high-phosphorus foods.
- 3 Dialysis.** Do your treatment sessions regularly, for the entire time prescribed.



Get your flu vaccination

Protect yourself this flu season and ask for the flu vaccine at your next clinic visit.



Is your next step a kidney transplant?

Do you wonder what life might be like without dialysis? Take our free Next Step Transplant class to 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 schedule of upcoming free classes.

Product issues? What to do

- PD** Call and let your PD unit know. Bring the defective item to the unit.
- HH** Call NxStage to let them know, but be sure to call your home unit too. We need to know the serial number and expiration date so we can track any issues.



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



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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.

Did you know?

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Talk to us!



You can help us give you the best quality support possible by letting us know what is, and isn't, working well for you. It's your right to share comments, complaints or grievances without fear of reprisal.

Talk to your home program staff. Your nurse and social worker want to know what's on your mind.

Use the comment program. Share your suggestions, questions or compliments using a comment program form, found at any dialysis center.

If you have a complaint or grievance, talk to your nurse manager or social worker. If you're not satisfied with the resolution, contact the clinical director or vice president. If you're still not satisfied, contact the chief medical officer or the president/CEO. Your social worker or social services manager Bill Bowden (**206-720-3772, bill.bowden@nwkidney.org**) can help you decide the best person to contact.



John Vandermay is a home hemodialysis nurse.