

Home Connection


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Feeling overstuffed?



How to treat and prevent constipation

Constipation is a common experience for kidney disease patients. It is uncomfortable and makes you feel bloated. Prolonged constipation is a serious medical condition that can cause a blockage of stool or tear the lining in the bowel.

 If you are a peritoneal dialysis patient, irregular bowel movements can make it harder for you to do your exchanges.

What are the signs of constipation?

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

If constipation is an issue for you, contact your health care team.



Nutrition manager Katy Wilkens and other dietitians on her team can give you tips on avoiding and relieving constipation.

Be regular: tips to keep you going



Eat more fiber. More fiber in your diet will make your stools softer and easier to pass. High-fiber foods to try include whole grains, bran, and fruits and vegetables. Check the amount of potassium in your fruits and vegetables – some are high in fiber but also high in potassium, which can build up to dangerous levels between dialysis treatments. Check with your dietitian if you're unsure. Increase fiber in your diet slowly – too much too fast can cause gas, bloating and cramping.

Exercise. Daily physical activity will increase blood circulation and muscle tone in your intestines, making it easier to regulate your bowels. Take a walk, stretch, do light housework.

Create a bowel routine. Take some time each day to spend in the bathroom. Respond to your urges to have a bowel movement. Talk with your doctor about laxatives or stool softeners that might work for you.



Ken Hamada does home hemodialysis treatments at home with help from his wife, Joan.

Does your caregiver need a break?

We have respite programs

Thanks to donor support, we have programs in place to allow caregivers of home dialysis patients to take some time off. While your caregiver is away, you can receive care at a Northwest Kidney Centers clinic.

- We offer periodic, **scheduled care** for patients who are unable to do dialysis on their own while their caregivers are away. Home hemodialysis patients may receive treatments at any Northwest Kidney Centers clinic and peritoneal dialysis patients can get care at select clinics.
- If needed, we'll arrange **transportation** for patients to and from the clinic.

To use the respite program, talk with your care manager.



Keep up dialysis even if your power goes out

If you lose power at home:

- HH** You can wait until power is restored and run the next day, or take your NxStage machine and bags to a location that has power, like the home of a friend or relative, or even a hotel. You may also call your home unit to set up an in-center backup run.
- PD** You can switch to manual (CAPD) exchanges temporarily. Talk with your care team about ordering CAPD supplies to have on hand in case of emergencies.



Are frozen supplies safe to use?

If your dialysate bags freeze, you can thaw them and bring them back to room temperature (60-75 degrees Fahrenheit). After thawing, be sure to thoroughly mix the contents by agitating the bag, and check for leaks.

If something doesn't look right, contact your care team.

If your Epopen is frozen, don't use it! Call the Northwest Kidney Centers pharmacy at 206-343-4870 for a new supply.



How to eat healthy during the holidays

The holidays mean favorite foods served in big portions. It can be hard to turn down these treats at your friends' or family's homes. With some planning, you can eat well and keep your fluid gains and blood values stable. Try these tips to keep yourself healthy and happy during the holiday season.

1. Prepare a healthy dish you'll enjoy that works for your diet.
2. Eat a snack before leaving home, so you don't overeat at holiday meals.
3. Avoid grazing between meals.
4. Choose fruits and vegetables that are served raw and need a lot of chewing, so you won't eat too many.
5. Use a smaller plate. It's all about moderation!
6. Choose wisely. Survey all your options and pick favorites that are worth eating.
7. If you drink, do it in moderation. Have your beverage over ice in a small glass to limit fluid intake.
8. Try taking a walk with friends and family to get yourself away from food temptation. For people with diabetes, a walk can help bring blood sugar levels down.



What's next?

Consider the possibilities at a free class

Wonder what life might be like without dialysis? Or if a different type of dialysis might work better for you? Take a free **Next Step** class to find out if home hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis or a kidney transplant is right for you.

Visit www.nwkidney.org for a class schedule.

Hien Dung chose home hemodialysis for the flexibility to travel.



Mark your calendar



Ceremony of Remembrance

A special memorial event

Saturday, April 2

10-11 a.m.

Northwest Kidney Centers

SeaTac Pavilion

17900 International Blvd. S

SeaTac



www.nwkidney.org

pr@nwkidney.org

206-292-2771



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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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Our pharmacy is here to help you



Managing medications is a big job. The time when you take your meds may depend on meal times; some medicines like phosphate binders must be taken with food, others should never be taken with food. It can be hard to track!

Our knowledgeable pharmacists can help with all your medications, kidney-related or not.

- They work closely with your kidney doctor, financial advisor, nurse, social worker and dietitian to coordinate care for you.
- If you have questions or if something isn't working, our pharmacists are ready with suggestions.
- Our pharmacists can check the combination of medications you take for potentially harmful drug and disease interactions.
- If you have trouble paying, they can help you find resources.
- Prescription delivery is free.



A friendly face like Tom Montemayor's is ready to greet you at our pharmacy.

206-343-4870 or 800-947-8902

pharmacy@nwkidney.org

www.nwkidney.org/pharmacy