

## Top 5 tips to make your dialysis more successful

Although dialysis is lifesaving, it can be tough. The good news is, there's a lot you can do to feel better, avoid infections and enjoy more energy. Take control of your health by following these tips:

**Do your own punctures.** You know your arm best! Having control over this part of dialysis makes many people feel less stress, and less pain too.

**Consider home dialysis.** More treatments, an option with home dialysis, make you feel better. You'll also enjoy a more flexible schedule and greater independence.

**Watch your fluids.** The most common reason people on dialysis visit the hospital? Too many fluids. Stick with your limit!

**Exercise and eat well.** Living a healthy lifestyle is key to feeling good on dialysis. Exercise regularly and follow your low-salt, kidney-friendly diet.

**Attend all appointments.** Your doctor monitors your labs, checks your medications and keeps your health top of mind. Make appointments with your doctor a priority. And, of course, be on time for dialysis, and stay for your full treatment.

## Give back

A meaningful way to honor your caregivers

Have any of your caregivers made a difference in your life? Do they help you feel better, listen and respond to your concerns, and work with you to make sure you get the very best care?

Consider saying thank you with a donation to Northwest Kidney Centers. Gifts help us provide nutritional supplements for people who can't afford them, special care services for very ill patients, and state-of-the-art equipment for our centers.

As a nonprofit, we welcome gifts to ensure that people with kidney disease continue to receive excellent care for years to come.

Yessica Nava with her dad, Juan Nava, who gets dialysis three times a week at our SeaTac clinic. He works out at the YMCA to stay fit.



All gifts, no matter the size, make a big difference.

Contact Dan O'Connor  
at 206-720-8514 or visit  
[nwkidney.org/give](http://nwkidney.org/give).

## Care for the whole you

### New screenings for depression

In February, our dialysis social workers began regular clinical depression screenings with patients, a requirement of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.



David Lyons comes to our Seattle clinic at 15th and Cherry for dialysis. His advice to himself and others: "Don't get set in your ways because you don't know what's coming next."

Depression can affect any one of us – people on dialysis, people with a chronic illness and people who are otherwise healthy. We want you to feel like yourself, and that means working with you to diagnose and treat depression.

#### Common symptoms of depression include:

- Feeling down or sad most of the day for nearly every day during the past two weeks
- Having feelings of worthlessness
- Feeling hopeless and wanting to give up
- Having excessive irritability or anger
- No longer enjoying activities you once enjoyed

#### To help with depression, your social worker will:

- Ask you new questions in your comprehensive assessments
- Talk with your physician about your results
- Make a follow-up plan with you



## Know your options

### Take a Next Step class

Think home dialysis might be right for you? Interested in pursuing a transplant? Step right up to one of our Next Step classes.

**Visit [nwkidney.org/classes](http://nwkidney.org/classes) to see a class schedule or call 206-292-2771, ext. 1082 to register.**



The good news is, depression is treatable. Don't wait if you're feeling low. Reach out to your social worker today if you have any concerns.



Dialysis technician Medena Keyian checks treatment information in a SeaTac patient's record.

## A new drug for anemia: Aranesp

When you have kidney failure, your kidneys usually don't make enough of the hormone erythropoietin. This causes your bone marrow to make fewer red blood cells, and that results in anemia. You feel tired and weak. Most people have more energy and feel much more like themselves when their anemia is being treated.

For the past 30 years, we gave our dialysis patients Epogen – EPO for short – to treat anemia. In 1985, Northwest Kidney Centers was the site of the first clinical trials of EPO in humans. Many patients called it a “miracle drug,” and we are proud we helped test it.

Now Amgen, the company that makes Epogen, has developed another drug, called darbepoetin alfa (Aranesp), which also treats anemia of chronic kidney disease. After much research, we started giving it to in-center patients in February.

### What we like about Aranesp:

- ➔ It can usually be administered by IV once a week, which means one less needle stick for you!
- ➔ It costs less, letting us put more money into other patient services.
- ➔ It's working well for our patients.



**Do you have questions about managing anemia?  
Talk to your nurse to learn more.**

## Let us know if your insurance changes Contact our finance counselors

Insurance can be tricky. We have an excellent patient financial team, located at our SeaTac Pavilion, who can help. Contact one of the financial case managers below if things change with your insurance, or you have any questions about your coverage.

**Sonia Edmondson: 206-720-3766**

**Mary Grennan: 206-720-3767**

**Anthony Moore: 206-720-3768**

**Aletha White: 206-720-3770**

**Prefer to meet face-to-face?** No problem. Call and make an appointment for an in-person meeting.

## A kidney-specialty pharmacy

**Kidney pharmacists know your meds best**

### Our pharmacists:

- ➔ Specialize in dialysis medications
- ➔ Check for drug and disease interaction, to make sure your meds can be taken together
- ➔ Can send your medications to your dialysis clinic or your home, for free

**Call 206-343-4870 or 800-947-8902 (toll-free) to speak to one of our pharmacists.**





[www.nwkidney.org](http://www.nwkidney.org)  
[pr@nwkidney.org](mailto:pr@nwkidney.org)  
 206-292-2771



Join us on Facebook and Twitter.  
 Hear the latest news as it happens!

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

Northwest Kidney Centers promotes the optimal health, quality of life and independence of people with kidney disease through patient care, education and research.

## Sneaky summer foods

### Watch out for foods high in potassium and water



Summer brings sunny weather, bright skies and different foods. Many summer fruits, like nectarines and peaches, are high in potassium. Others, like watermelon, are packed with water. Limit high potassium fruits to one serving per day. And keep track of the foods and liquids you consume to stay within your limits.



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# Hitting the dusty trail

## Plan ahead for summer vacations

### Two months before your trip

- ✓ Discuss your travel plans with your center's receptionist.
- ✓ Find a dialysis center online at [medicare.gov/dialysisfacilitycompare](http://medicare.gov/dialysisfacilitycompare) and call the center to arrange dialysis appointments.
- ✓ Check with your insurance provider about coverage.
- ✓ Complete any paperwork the center needs.
- ✓ Arrange with your center to have your medical records sent.

### A week before you leave

- ✓ Ask us for your last three treatment log sheets to bring to the center you're visiting.
- ✓ Confirm your dialysis appointments with the center.
- ✓ In your carry-on luggage, pack medications as well as a list of all medications you take and contact information for your home and visiting dialysis centers.

### The day you leave

- ✓ Bon voyage! Rest easy knowing you've planned ahead.



**Questions?**  
 Talk with your nurse or  
 visit [nwkidney.org/travel](http://nwkidney.org/travel).