

We are growing to help make life better for you

By Joyce Jackson, president and CEO

It is our privilege to serve you. We are growing and investing in services to make life better for our 1,600 dialysis patients, including you.



Patient numbers are growing. We aim to be the provider of choice for people who need dialysis services in our region. Our clinic treatments are up 3 percent over last year.

We are expanding to meet community need. Our Lake City clinic expanded by five stations last year. We have approval to expand our SeaTac clinic by three stations and our Renton clinic by four stations.

We are financially stable. We manage our expenses carefully so we can invest in equipment, facilities and new programs for you. Recently we refurbished our Elliott Bay clinic in downtown Seattle. We are using new dialysis machines at our Lake Washington clinic in Bellevue, and we have installed Comcast expanded TV stations in six clinics to give you more channel options.



"I really have to budget energy," says Shari Peterson, who gets dialysis at our clinic at 15th and Cherry in Seattle. "You have to keep figuring out ways to modify your lifestyle. Go for a LITTLE walk. Maybe that's just to carry the recycling to the dumpster. You can't sit on the couch. You've got to get outside."

We're making progress on quality goals

We are seeing success in our quest to **reduce hemodialysis catheters**.

Thank you obtaining a permanent fistula or graft in a timely manner.

Our **hand hygiene campaign** is helping reduce infections.

Our **flu vaccine campaign** is protecting you from the flu.

Many of you take an **oral protein supplement** with each dialysis treatment; this helps you reach your albumin goal.

You **stay for your full treatment**, which helps ensure adequate dialysis.

You work hard to live with kidney disease, and it is our goal to support you to achieve your goals for health and quality of life.

Please give us your input on the twice-a-year patient survey to let us know how we are doing. Thank you for choosing Northwest Kidney Centers for your care!

Keep your bones healthy

Kidneys have a huge role in keeping your bones healthy. When kidneys fail, you have to pay attention to your different body chemistry.

If you're on dialysis your kidneys can't activate vitamin D from your food any more. No activated vitamin D means less calcium gets absorbed from your food, so your blood calcium levels drop.

Additionally, phosphorus builds up in the blood when you are on dialysis. Normal kidneys eliminate 99 percent of phosphorus in the urine, but that doesn't happen as kidneys fail. This high phosphorus level causes your body to pull calcium from your bones, weakening them and making them easier to break.

Your parathyroid gland, located in your neck, is affected by low calcium as well. When the calcium level is low in your bloodstream, the gland makes more parathyroid hormone (PTH) to raise calcium levels. This PTH causes calcium to be released from bone, also making them weaker.



"Never eat to excess. Be very careful with liquids and sodium. And take binders with every meal and snack." Those are the dietary rules Dave Becker follows to keep his body in balance between treatments at our Scribner clinic. Here he enjoys a visit with grandsons Simon and Cameron.

To help keep your body balanced:

- ➔ **Go to dialysis.** Go to all your scheduled dialysis treatments, and stay the full session to get rid of as much phosphorus as you can.
- ➔ **Watch your diet.** Limit your intake of high-phosphorus food. Ask your dietitian for Northwest Kidney Centers' phosphorus brochure, which has a list of low- and high-phosphorus foods. Stay away from processed foods, and limit milk-based foods, cheese, nuts and beans.
- ➔ **Take your binders.** Take your phosphate binders when you eat. They stop the phosphorus in your food from going into your blood.
- ➔ **Ask your doctor about active vitamin D** to help maintain healthy calcium levels. Vitamin D may increase your calcium levels, so don't start taking it without checking with your doctor.
- ➔ **If your PTH is high, ask your doctor about medications** such as calcitriol, Zemplar or Hectorol. Most hemodialysis patients take Zemplar, an IV vitamin D, which is given with dialysis.

We'll help you reconcile your medications

Taking your medications as directed is essential to your good health. But first you need to know which medications to take. If you're new to dialysis or have recently been in the hospital, you might find your prescriptions changing. For example, meds that you were taking before a hospital admission may be discontinued. Or they might mistakenly be duplicated when you leave the hospital.

To help you avoid problems, Northwest Kidney Centers conducts medication reconciliation. This means we compare the medications in your doctor or hospital record with the medications that you are actually taking. We sort out any differences and talk with your doctor to resolve any potentially dangerous combinations, omissions or duplications. In the end, you and your care providers have an accurate list of your meds.

📍 **If you are a new patient**, a Northwest Kidney Centers pharmacist may contact you and ask that you bring in all of your medication bottles. The pharmacist will go over each medication in detail with you. You can ask questions and make sure you understand what you are taking and why.

📍 **If you are an existing patient**, we do medication reconciliation at least once a year during your comprehensive assessment. If have questions, please contact our pharmacy at 206-343-4870.



Northwest Kidney Centers pharmacist Lisette Shields will help make sure you are taking the right medications.



"Since I gained control with home hemodialysis, I can talk to my doctor. Instead of him telling me what to do, I can tell him what I need. It helped me be more successful with the disease," says Latina Brooks.

Consider your next step See if home dialysis or a transplant could be right for you

Take one of our free classes to learn more.

Going home

Our Next Step Home Hemodialysis or Next Step PD class will tell you what's involved in doing your own treatments. With home dialysis, you can follow a more normal lifestyle, with a less restricted diet and more independence as you set your own treatment schedule.

A new kidney

Our Next Step Transplant class will answer all your questions about transplant qualifications, living donor and deceased donor transplants, the waitlist, and how to live well with a transplant.

Visit www.nwkidney.org/classes to see upcoming dates and locations.



It's easy to get medications from us

Our pharmacy will send prescriptions to your home or to your clinic, where you can pick them up at your next dialysis visit.

Expert consultation, easy ordering, free delivery

Phone: 206-343-4870

Toll-free: 800-947-8902

pharmacy@nwkidney.org

Refill your prescription online:

www.nwkidney.org/pharmacy



www.nwkidney.org
pr@nwkidney.org
206-292-2771



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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.



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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.**