

# Transplant Connection

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## Avoid getting sick as a dog Don't let your pet make you ill

Pets provide a special kind of companionship and comfort in many people's lives, and research shows that owning a pet has some real health benefits.

But, as a transplant patient, you have a higher risk of getting diseases from animals because you are immunosuppressed. Some simple tips for transplant patients from the Centers for Disease Control can help you lower your risk of getting sick from contact with animals. See the column at right.



Transplant patient Diane Nelson and best friend Poppet.

- ▶ Wash hands thoroughly after touching animals and their droppings. Avoid contact with poop if possible.
- ▶ Take any cat or dog with diarrhea to a veterinarian to be checked for infection with *Cryptosporidium*, *Giardia*, *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*. These can cause you serious illness.
- ▶ Protect your pet from foodborne illnesses which can be passed to you. Don't feed pets raw meat. Don't let pets hunt or scavenge for food, or drink from the toilet bowl.
- ▶ If you are getting a new pet, avoid animals that are ill, stray or less than 6 months old. They are more likely to carry diseases.
- ▶ Cleaning up
  - Have someone else clean bird cages (daily) and fish tanks. If you clean, be sure to wear gloves and wash hands well afterward.
  - Have another person clean the cat's litter box every day. Do not put the litter box in the kitchen, dining room or anywhere food is prepared or eaten.
- ▶ Some animals are high risk and you should avoid them completely.  
**Never touch:**
  - Reptiles such as lizards, snakes and turtles
  - Baby chicks and ducklings
  - Exotic pets such as monkeys and any wild animals

# Living Well with a Transplant

## A class to help you keep a healthy lifestyle

Ask the experts! Northwest Kidney Centers offers a free class for kidney transplant recipients taught by a pharmacist and a dietitian. Even if you've had your transplant for a while, the class can help you stay motivated to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

### The focus is on tools to live long and live well with your transplant:

- ▶ How to understand and manage all those medications. About 36 percent of transplant failures are due to patients not taking their pills.
- ▶ How to cut your risk of heart and blood vessel disease. Transplant patients are at high risk of death from these causes.
- ▶ Plus information on infection and cancer risk.

### Class details:

- ▶ Offered at no charge every month at Northwest Kidney Centers Haviland Pavilion, 700 Broadway, Seattle
- ▶ 2.5 hours of class with a pharmacist and dietitian
- ▶ Family and friends are welcome

### Interested?


Call 206-292-2771, ext. 1082 to sign up for upcoming classes.

## Don't drink your calories

Sugary drink intake is on the rise right along with waist lines. Could your favorite drink be packing on the pounds? Cutting just one of these high-calorie beverages per day could boost your weight loss or help you maintain a healthy weight.

Instead of:	Calories	Sugar (teaspoons)	▶	Try this:	Calories	Sugar (teaspoons)
Orange juice, 13.5-ounce bottle	190	10	▶	1 large orange	86	4 (all natural)
Cola, 20-ounce bottle	240	16	▶	Diet cola, 20-ounce bottle	0	0
Flavored water, 20-ounce bottle	125	8	▶	Flavored sparkling water, 16.9 ounces	0	0
Grande mocha, 16 ounces	330	9	▶	Grande nonfat latte, 16 ounces	130	4.5
Coconut water, 16.9 ounces	90	5.5	▶	Water, 16 ounces	0	0
Iced tea, 20-ounce bottle	200	14	▶	Unsweetened or diet iced tea, 20-ounce bottle	0	0
Bottled sports drink, 20 ounces	125	4	▶	Water*	0	0
Original Jamba Juice banana berry smoothie	290	20.5	▶	Homemade smoothie without added sugar**	160	3 (all natural)

\*You need a sports drink only with vigorous activity greater than one hour \*\* 1 cup frozen fruit, 1 cup/container milk/yogurt



# Keep smiling: dental care after transplant

Transplant recipient Patsy Hoefel.

Before your transplant, you probably had to see a dentist as part of your transplant evaluation. But dental care after transplant is important, too. **Immunosuppression increases your risk for infection and other problems in your mouth.** “Dry mouth” is common and increases risk of cavities.

- ▶ **Right after a transplant, don't have any dental work done for 3 to 6 months** (except for emergency care), because your risk for infection is highest.
- ▶ Then **see your dentist and have your teeth cleaned every 6 months.** Besides checking for cavities and gum disease, your dentist can check for signs of cancer and other problems.
- ▶ **Always check with your doctor before you have any kind of dental work done,** even teeth cleaning. Your doctor may need to talk to your dentist, and may prescribe antibiotics to prevent infection or adjust other medications before treatment.
- ▶ When you go to the dentist, **make sure that the dentist and hygienist know you are a transplant patient.** Give the dentist the contact information for your doctor and a list of all your medications.
- ▶ Take care of your smile! **Brush twice a day, and floss every day.** Call your dentist if you notice problems or changes: tooth pain; swelling or tenderness of gums; bleeding; sores, lumps, or red or white patches in your mouth; or any other changes.

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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.

## Mark your calendar!

**Nov. 16:**

Northwest Kidney Centers  
 Gala, 5 p.m., Hyatt Regency  
 Bellevue



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# 'Tis the season for flu shots

As a transplant patient, you are at increased risk for complications from the flu because your body isn't able to fight infection as well as it could. Flu vaccines only protect you for about 6 months, so it's important to get a shot every year. Also, the vaccine changes every year to protect against different types of flu virus.

Protect yourself, your family, your friends and people around you by getting the flu vaccine this season. Encourage others to do the same to prevent the flu from spreading. Stay healthy!



Transplant recipient Tuyen N. Pham and his wife, Nga Cao.