

# Home Connection

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## Northwest Kidney Centers' longest running patient offers tips for good health

If Warren Buffett was giving financial tips, you'd listen. If Serena Williams offered pointers on tennis, you'd listen. And when Lucille Parker offers dialysis tips, you'd be wise to listen.

Diagnosed with CKD in Illinois in 1977, Lucille first came to Northwest Kidney Centers in 1979 and has been on home hemo ever since. What's her secret? "You have to stay on your schedule and take care of yourself," she advises. "You don't cut your treatments short and you can't skip."

"Keep your fistula clean" is another tip. Some people are surprised at her diligence. "What are you doing?" they ask. "Washing my fistula," she answers. "What are you doing now?" they ask. "Washing my fistula again," she says.

"There are good days and bad days, and on the good days I don't feel like it's been 40 years," she says.



Lucille Parker has dialyzed for 40 years with support and care from her husband, Michael, making her the longest running dialysis patient at Northwest Kidney Centers. During that time, she has had only one infection.

## Live long and well on home dialysis

### **Stick to your treatment schedule.**

Every minute of dialysis is important and missing even a little can affect you.

- HH** Your Kt/V value indicates whether you are dialyzing enough. If you dialyze three times a week or less, your Kt/V goal is 1.4 or higher. If you dialyze more frequently, your goal is 2.2 or higher. Low numbers mean that too much waste is left in your body, and you need more dialysis.

### **Keep your access clean.**

To feel better and live longer:

- HH** Wash your arm every day and before each treatment.

Check your access for redness, swelling or pus.

- PD** Do exit site care every day, especially after swimming in saltwater. This can help prevent peritonitis, an infection that enters the belly through an unclean access during treatment. If you get hot or sweat a lot, do more exit care to keep your access dry.

Remember to wash your hands and wear gloves and a mask when using your access.

Call your care team if you have questions or concerns.



Home hemodialysis patient Matt Kidd with his mother, Bernadette, who is his caregiver, at home in Covington. Close coordination between patients and caregivers helps when preparing for and responding to emergencies. Matt received a kidney transplant at press time. Congratulations, Matt!

## Are you ready for an emergency?

It may be beautiful outside now, but that will change. Make a plan for bad weather and other emergencies.

**Make an emergency supply kit** following the checklist.

**Keep food on the emergency diet at home.** It will help you survive if you are unable to get dialysis. Ask your dietitian what to stock or go to [www.nwkidney.org/emergency-diet](http://www.nwkidney.org/emergency-diet).

**Keep a list of contacts.** Include your care team, other health care providers, friends and relatives. Be sure your home dialysis care team has three different ways to reach you.

**Make backup travel plans.** This step will help you get to appointments or treatments in case of a power outage.

**Check weather reports.** Dialyze early if the power might go out. Charge your phone battery.

**Have extra dialysis supplies and medications.** In case deliveries get delayed, keep a one-week supply of dialysis solution and tubing on hand.

**HH** If you are on home hemo, keep emergency kayexalate at home to help get rid of potassium that builds up when you miss dialysis. Ask your doctor about it.



## Emergency supply kit checklist

- Emergency diet food supply for three to five days
- Paper or plastic plates, cups, bowls, eating utensils
- Non-electric can opener
- Aluminum foil
- Battery-operated radio
- Flashlight
- Car cell phone charger
- Cash
- Extra batteries
- Candles and matches in waterproof container
- First aid kit
- Sharp knife and scissors
- Paper towels
- Baby or sanitary wipes
- Heavy-duty garbage bags
- Gallon jugs of distilled water (one gallon per person per day)
- Unscented bleach and eyedropper to purify water (16 drops per gallon of water) for cooking and drinking.

## Lost power at home?



You can wait until power is restored and run the next day, or take your 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 emergency.

### If you must go to an emergency shelter:

Tell shelter staff right away that you are a dialysis patient with medical and diet needs.

### If you leave your home, take these with you:

- Medications and medication list
- Phone numbers for your doctors
- Dialysis clinic contact information
- Contact information for friends and relatives in and outside your area.



**Have a week's worth of supplies** on hand and well-organized in case of an emergency. Be sure to check expiration dates so your supplies and medications are safe. When temperatures are low, check that your supplies are not frozen. Call your care manager if something doesn't look right.

## Do you know your care manager? Who's on your care team?

Your care manager is the nurse who oversees your health. Your care manager is a key part of your care team, along with a nephrologist, dietitian and social worker.



### If you aren't sure about your care team, call us and ask:

**HH** HH on-call nurse: 206-292-2558 or 1-877-216-2558 (toll-free)

**PD** PD on-call nurse: 206-292-2285 or 1-877-216-2285 (toll-free)

### Write down the names and numbers of your care team for reference.

Your care team	Phone
Care manager:	
Nephrologist:	
Dietitian:	
Social worker:	



## Take advantage of our pharmacy

In addition to filling all of your prescriptions, our friendly pharmacy staff can give you expert advice. You can refill online and get free delivery.

**Phone: 206-343-4870**

**Toll-free: 800-947-8902**

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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.



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## A phone app could save your life

What if trouble hit and you were unable to speak or unconscious? An Android app called Medical ID allows first responders to easily access your stored medical information without having to unlock your phone. Android users can download the app for free from the Play Store.

For iPhone users, open the Health app and tap Medical ID at the bottom right. Create your Medical ID when prompted. The Show When Locked option will allow access to your Medical ID in an emergency even if the phone is locked.

The app is a good place to record medications, your doctor's information and health metrics like your blood pressure. We recommend that you carry paper copies of your pertinent medical information, but the phone app is a good backup.

