



## Health & Safety: Get your flu shot



The continued presence of COVID in our communities makes getting a flu shot all the more important. Getting COVID and flu vaccines are the best way to keep you and those around you safe and healthy.

Get a flu shot at any of our clinics.

Our goal is to have 100% of eligible patients get their flu vaccine.

## Nutrition and Fitness Manager Katy Wilkens retires after a career of profound contributions

If you're a Northwest Kidney Centers patient, you've benefited from diet and nutrition advice from Katy Wilkens directly or through someone on her team of expert dietitians. After 42 years of leading our Nutrition and Fitness program, Katy retired in November.

A true pioneer in the field of renal nutrition, Katy has been a driving force behind many dietary programs and initiatives in the renal community locally, regionally and nationally. She is a Fellow of the National Kidney Foundation and has received many awards for excellence in kidney nutrition. Perhaps most amazing is her boundless commitment to helping anyone with questions about eating a

healthy diet for kidneys (especially by cutting back on salt).

She began as the only dietitian and leaves in place an incredible team of 27 registered dietitians. Her compassion and commitment continue to inspire and guide us.



Katy Wilkens



## Get ready for the next emergency

If we've learned anything in recent years, it's to prepare for most anything. With winter weather on the way, the ongoing pandemic and issues in the global supply chain, please make time to get ready before an emergency occurs.

- Review the resources at [www.nwkidney.org/emergency](http://www.nwkidney.org/emergency) (make hard copies)
- Check public library websites for local information
- Make backup plans for your transportation to dialysis
- Be sure your care team has your current phone number and emergency contact information
- Keep your clinic phone number handy. You can always find it at [www.nwkidney.org/locations](http://www.nwkidney.org/locations)

Our main phone number is 206-292-2771

# Thinking Safety

## Support your immune system

Staying healthy means being good to your immune system:

- A healthy diet – When you have your check-in with your dietitian, ask how your diet is supporting your overall health.
- Exercise regularly – The weather can make it a bit of a challenge, but there are indoor and outdoor opportunities for 30 minutes of exercise, 5 days a week all around us.
- Enough sleep – You're not alone; about half of dialysis patients report sleep problems. Fortunately, there are many effective strategies to try. Ask your care team for ideas.
- All scheduled dialysis treatments!

## Many safety measures at work to keep you protected

Be it wearing a mask, social distancing, getting COVID and flu vaccines or frequent hand-washing, many safety measures come together to provide a protective barrier to keep you safe.

Don't overlook any of the safety measures. Each contributes to keeping you healthy.



Anu Sharma washes his hands at home. Frequent hand-washing is one of the keys to preventing the spread of infections.

### Clothing made for people on dialysis

Hemowear makes clothing for people on dialysis: [www.hemowear.com](http://www.hemowear.com).

**Free nutrition classes at [www.nwkidney.org/classes](http://www.nwkidney.org/classes)**

## Eating and dialysis: It's best to eat before treatment, not during

These days we discourage eating during treatments because you put yourself at more risk when taking your mask down to eat. But there are other reasons why eating while you dialyze isn't such a good idea.

There's a higher chance of choking during treatment, particularly for patients with diabetes. And it's hard to swallow when your chair is tilted back. Eating during treatment can also cause other unwanted experiences, such as cramps, low blood pressure, nausea and vomiting.

## When and what to eat

It's best to eat at least two hours before a treatment. Pick foods that are easy to digest, such as low-fat, low fiber, high sugar/starch foods. Examples:

- A hard-boiled egg, hot or cold cereal and toast with jam
- A tuna fish sandwich, a roll and an apple

Avoid foods that are high in fat and fiber; they will stay in your stomach longer and are more likely to cause problems.

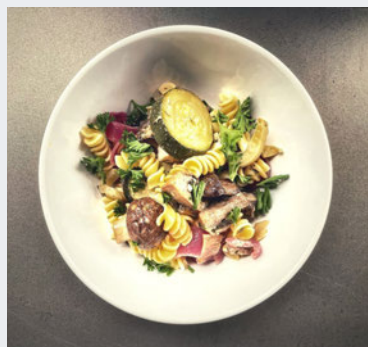
Ask any of our expert dietitians for advice if you have questions about how your diet affects the way you feel during and after treatments.

Ask to use the pedlar device if you get cramps during treatment; the movement will help your cramps subside.



## Dietitian's Pick

Registered Dietitian Nikki Nygren suggests Grilled Vegetable Pasta Salad as a dish to enjoy a few hours ahead of treatment. It's easy to prepare and can be made ahead of time!



See the full recipe at [www.nwkidney.org/recipe/grilled-vegetable-pastasalad/](http://www.nwkidney.org/recipe/grilled-vegetable-pastasalad/).

Find hundreds of kidney-friendly recipes at [www.nwkidney.org/recipes](http://www.nwkidney.org/recipes).



## Congratulations to Nikki Nygren

Nikki was recently named chair-elect of the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) Council on Renal Nutrition, a primary contributor to renal nutrition policies in the U.S. Nikki is also a Fellow of the NKF.

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



[www.nwkidney.org](http://www.nwkidney.org)  
[communications@nwkidney.org](mailto:communications@nwkidney.org)

**Northwest Kidney Centers:** 206-292-2771

**Home hemodialysis:** 206-292-2558 or 1-877-216-2558

**Peritoneal dialysis:** 206-292-2285 or 1-877-292-2285



## Specialized pharmacy

Have your prescriptions delivered to you at home or at your clinic at no cost and get expert advice from our pharmacists.

Order

- online at [www.nwkidney.org](http://www.nwkidney.org)
- by phone at 206-343-4870
- toll-free 1-800-947-8902



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## Reminders for our patients

### We can help with insurance questions

Considering changing your insurance? Before you do, please talk with your financial case manager to see if the plan you are considering meets your dialysis, prescription and/or transplant needs. You can reach the Patient Finance team at 206-292-2771.

### Your feedback is important

Please watch your mailbox for the fall patient survey for in-center and home patients. The current survey runs through Jan. 7, 2022. We appreciate your feedback and pay close attention to it.

Surveys are mailed from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and are administered by SPH Analytics. Look for the CMS logo on the notice and survey!

