



RENAL ROUNDUP

For Patients in the Intermountain End-Stage Renal Disease Network (ESRD Network #15)

SUMMER 2011

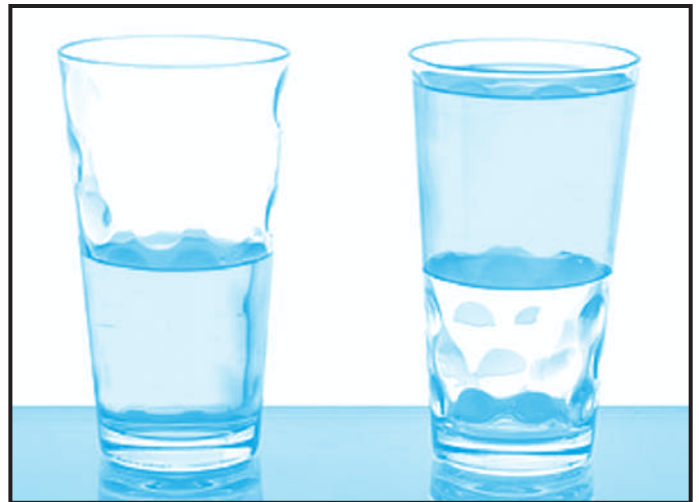
IS YOUR GLASS HALF EMPTY OR HALF FULL?

By Ray Perkins, Nevada

Until the past few years my wife would have told you my glass was always half empty (or at least that's the way I acted). My first thought when diagnosed was "You have got to be kidding me!" "I'm strong, healthy, always the athlete, and you are telling me my kidneys are failing?" It can't be.

Well, we can't decide who gets what. We just have to learn to do with what we're given, in the best possible ways. That's when I made it my "job" to take care of myself and get on with living and do it with the best attitude possible.

In order to do this I started with my excellent work ethic and applied it to my new "job." I took it upon myself to pay very close attention to the dialysis process so I could be of help in "getting hooked up" and be prepared to "un-hook" in an emergency. I also started to get to know the staff, all of the staff, because they are now my co-workers and I spend a lot of time with them. This works well so I have no uncomfortable feelings when someone different "hooks me up." Then I made it a point to really pay attention to what my social worker, dietitian and others were telling me and to do my best to apply the information to my lifestyle. They want us to stay alive and are working hard to achieve this; I feel it only fair to do my part. I want to see my grandchild grow up, among a huge list of other things I want to be around for!



By looking at dialysis as a job, rather than a "horrible thing only I have to go through," I think it gets you in a better frame of mind to know that you are not useless just because you may no longer be a money earning employee. You actually have the most important job of your life in front of you. Be the best employee you can be--it pays off.

I'm not saying we aren't going to feel down at times and wonder "Is all this effort really worth it?" It is. And going at the effort with a smile and the best possible attitude makes such a huge difference. I truly believe in the "power of thought" and in this instance we need all the help we can get, right? Not to mention, thought power is free, why wouldn't you use it!

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Congratulations to **John Dexter** from Arizona, the winner of our **renal TIPLINE** naming contest.



MAKING MEMORIES

By Virginia Holt, Nevada

One day while sitting for a treatment at Liberty Dialysis, I noticed an advertisement on the wall that said "Royal Caribbean of the Seas, Come Cruise with Us." Curiosity got the best of me, so I called and was surprised to find that there is a cruise ship for dialysis patients that goes to over 50 ports.

The "Dream Vacation" started right then and there. We had to pick a place to go, send for passports, find out which members of the family could go, what time of year they could get off work, do some cruise shopping for the right outfits, checking cameras and on and on. Planning has always been a big part of my traveling.

My husband and I traveled a great deal and after he died, I still did a bit of traveling but I just assumed that my travel days were over when the kidneys failed.

Finally the big day arrived and we were on a plane going across the U.S. on our way to our Dream Vacation. There was my daughter, her husband and one granddaughter who were able to

go. We stayed overnight in Galveston, so I would not be too tired, and boarded the ship the next morning.

Everything was perfect--the weather, the blue sky, the white sand at the ports, the different shades of blue water. It was the best anyone could ever dream of. The dialysis on board was excellent. They took care of you, were on time, and coordinated with Liberty Dialysis. There were 15 to 18 patients on the ship of 3700, and I was even able to have lunch with a few of them. It was fun to talk to patients from all over the country. I did not feel like I was different--just a lady on vacation with her family.

No need to sit home and wish. You too can have your dream vacation, even on dialysis. We are already talking about where and when we can do it again.



“Many view dialysis as sort of a death sentence, but I don’t! It gives me time to ponder the meaning of life and review all of the many precious opportunities there are to be enjoyed and taken advantage of.”

*Paul Long, on dialysis for 30 years, Utah
Prime Times Newspaper, Salt Lake City, UT, February 2011*

Supported by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Contract No HHSM-500-2010-NW015C. The opinions and conclusions expressed are those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. The authors assume full responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of the ideas presented.



MY LIFE IS MORE THAN DIALYSIS

By Manuel R. Villa, New Mexico Member
Network #15 Patient Leadership Committee

I am a person who decided to take my life one day at a time. I thank the Lord for giving me another day and guiding me to the right path on a daily basis. I work part-time as a security guard at New Mexico State University; most of the time I work on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from two to seven pm. I also help my wife take care of a two-year old grandson Monday through Thursday. I am able to work around the yard and do a little upkeep on our private vehicles. I am a devout Catholic and I'm very active with the church. I am also an active member of the Knights of Columbus. Most important to me is my large family, my wife and our six children, seventeen grandchildren, five step-grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. They are pretty concerned about me. I am a fortunate man.

CHECK OUT WHAT'S ON OUR WEB SITE
at www.esrdnet15.org

**Have a look at our web site and save it
in your Favorites!**



IS YOUR GLASS HALF EMPTY OR HALF FULL? Cont...

This turn around in attitude not only has been very beneficial to me but has made my wife extremely happy. And who but our loved ones are we most worried about keeping happy? Exactly. I can imagine our loved ones go through quite a lot of worry and concern knowing there is only so much they can do to be there for us, but they can't cure us. I am betting most of them go through this worry and pain pretty silently; and probably more so than we are aware of. Our families need to know when we are down and we need a little extra loving but they shouldn't be subjected to our being on a downer all the time. Who wants to spend time with someone who is in a miserable mood all the time?

Having this new attitude made me want to expand my horizons after I started dialysis and got used to things, and we started taking trips out of town again. We haven't gone far yet, just weekends, but I have to tell you that everyone is happy to see me, glad I'm there, and have even gone as far as to learn what kinds of food are best for me and cater to my dietary needs. My sister-in-law went to her computer and made it a point to come up with kidney-friendly foods to eat while we were visiting and we all enjoyed several new recipes. She has made me feel special while also feeling normal. We do things that I am capable of

without getting too tired and it has been great. Rather than cancel the fun out of your life, plan the kind of fun you can have and take pleasure in it!

I recently went on a day trip to go prospecting, something I hadn't been able to do in a long time. I planned ahead and took the kinds of food I was supposed to eat. I ate lots of small snacks and kept myself hydrated and didn't over-do; I had a GREAT time. You can too. Start small, put some thought into how you feel at different times of the day and plan around that.

**Renal failure doesn't mean fun
failure. Have as much as you can!**

If we can look at things in a better light it benefits everyone we touch in our lives and mostly ourselves. My advice is take each day as it comes, look at your dialysis as a job – you were used to going to work before--this is just different work. Work with your team to keep yourself as healthy as possible, remember you're keeping yourself alive by doing so, and try to have a cheerful attitude as much as possible.

HOW I COPE WITH DIALYSIS

By Ruby Willow, Wyoming

I have been on dialysis since September 26, 2009. At first I was in denial and didn't want to start dialysis, but my four grandchildren and four children said they wanted me around and told me that it's important to take care of my health. I quickly came out of my depression with my grandchildren and children's help. Tips that I have for other dialysis patients are to have a positive attitude and keep God in your life. I pray a lot and it helps me cope with life and my health issues. I walk a lot and exercise to a limit to keep my body healthy. I keep my positive attitude by staying healthy. Another tip is to keep good attendance with dialysis treatments--don't miss any of them.



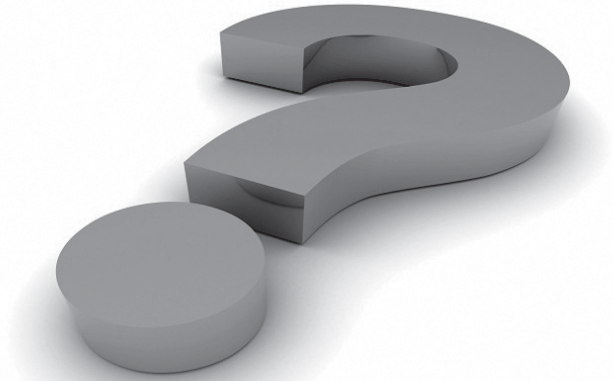
THE RENAL TIPLINE

- **Tools**
- **Information**
- **Patient support**

Topics of interest to patients recorded by patients. Look for more information in future issues of *Renal Roundup*.

*Make note of our
toll-free number:*
1 (800) 783-8818

Have A Problem?



For treatment or facility problems talk to facility staff members first (social worker, head nurse, administrator, or doctor); then, follow the steps of the facility's grievance procedure; if the problem remains and is about quality of care, you may contact us at:

ESRD Network #15
165 South Union Blvd., #466
Lakewood, CO 80228
1 (800) 783-8818
Email: info@nw15.esrd.net

OR

You may contact your State Health Department:

AZ: (602) 364-3030
CO: (303) 692-2904 or
1 (800) 886-7689
NV: 1 (800) 225-3414
NM: (505) 476-9027 or
1 (800) 752-8649
UT: (801) 538-6158 or
1 (800) 662-4157
WY: (307) 777-7123

