

WESTMORELAND COUNTY

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

INSIDE LINE

SUMMER 2013

KEEP YOUR KIDNEYS HEALTHY

by The National Institutes of Health

Your kidneys aren't very big, each is about the size of your fist, but they do important work. They keep you healthy by maintaining just the right balance of water and other substances inside your body.

Unfortunately, if your kidneys start to malfunction, you might not realize it for a long while. Kidney disease usually doesn't make you feel sick until the problem becomes serious and irreversible.

Your kidneys are two reddish, bean-shaped organs located on either side of your spine in the middle of your back. Their main job is to filter your blood. Each kidney contains about a million tiny filters that can process around 40 gallons of fluid every day, about enough to fill a home's hot water heater. When blood passes through the kidney, the filters sift and hold onto the substances your body might need, such as certain nutrients and much of the water.

Harmful wastes and extra water and nutrients are routed to the nearby bladder and flushed away as urine.

Your kidneys also produce several hormones. These hormones help to control your blood pressure, make red blood cells and activate vitamin D, which keeps your bones strong.

We all lose a little of our kidney function as we get older. People can even survive with just one kidney if they donate the other to a friend or family member.

But when a kidney function drops because of an underlying kidney disease, it's something to be concerned about. Toxins and extra water can build up in your blood. Falling hormone production can cause other problems. About 1 in 10 adults nationwide, or about 20 million people, have at least some signs of kidney damage.

There are different types of kidney disease. Most strike both kidneys at the same time, harming the tiny filters, called nephrons and reducing their filtering ability. When

damage to nephrons happens quickly, often because of injury or poisoning, it's known as acute kidney injury. It's more common, though, for nephrons to worsen slowly and silently for years or even decades. This is known as chronic kidney disease.

Chronic kidney disease can strike people of any race, but African Americans are especially at risk. African Americans also tend to have high rates of diabetes and high blood pressure, the two leading causes of kidney disease. Other risk factors for kidney disease include heart disease and a family history of kidney failure, a severe form of kidney disease.

If you have these risk factors, it's important to be screened for kidney disease. Screens usually involve simple laboratory tests; a urine test to look for kidney damage, and a blood test to measure how well the kidneys are working.

The urine test checks for a protein called albumin, which isn't routinely detected when your kidneys are healthy. The blood test checks your GFR,

glomerular filtration rate. GFR is an estimate of your kidney's filtering ability. A GFR below 60 is a sign of chronic kidney disease. A GFR below 15 is described as kidney failure.

Without treatment, kidney disease often gets worse. If your GFR drops below 15, you may feel tired and weak, with nausea, vomiting and itching. By that point, you may need a kidney transplant or dialysis. It's a good idea to talk with your doctor about the possibility of these therapies long before they're needed. It takes time to understand your options, and it's easier to figure things out when you're feeling healthy.

Preferred therapy for kidney failure is to have a kidney transplant, but not everyone can have a transplant. Some obstacles include long waiting lists for healthy kidneys and finding a well-matched donor. Dialysis is a treatment that filters wastes and water from the blood, allowing patients with kidney failure to feel better and continue with everyday activities.

You can take many steps to avoid or delay reaching the point of kidney failure. The best thing you can do is control your blood pressure. A healthy lifestyle, including physical activity and a heart-healthy diet, can help to normalize blood pressure and also slow kidney disease. If you have kidney damage, too much sodium and protein can have a negative effect. Eat less sodium and more fruits, vegetables and whole grains;

and to reduce fats, choose lean meats and low-fat or fat-free dairy products.

If you have kidney disease, your health care provider may recommend additional changes to your diet. And if lifestyle changes aren't enough to slow down kidney damage, your doctor may prescribe medications to reduce blood pressure, control blood glucose and lower your cholesterol. Talk to your doctor about being tested for kidney disease and keep your kidneys healthy.

FARMERS MARKET VOUCHERS AVAILABLE

The 2013 Farmers Market Nutrition Program provides eligible seniors with vouchers to purchase produce grown in Pennsylvania. This program, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, provides four \$5.00 vouchers to be used at participating Farmer Markets from June 1, 2013 until November 30, 2013. A list of participating Farmers Markets will be available at sign-up sites. Applicants must bring proof of age and residency. Examples of proof are:

- Driver's license
- Photo identification card
- AAA transportation card
- Birth certificate
- Utility receipts

Homebound individuals may have someone apply for them with the required documentation of age and residency, as well as a

completed proxy form. The proxy form will be available at the sign up sites and the Area Agency on Aging office. The form requires both the signature of the senior and the individual picking up the vouchers; therefore, the proxy form needs completed prior to receiving the vouchers. Residents of personal care and domiciliary homes are not eligible.

You must be age 60 or older (as of December 31, 2013), a Westmoreland County resident, and meet income guidelines (up to \$21,257 per year for a single person and \$28,694 per year for a couple). Income of all individuals residing in a household must be considered. There is a one time sign-up per season. The scheduled sign-up sites and times are listed below.

New Kensington Senior Center
1039 Third Ave., New Kensington
724-335-8597, Wednesday, June 19

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

McKenna Senior Center
971 Old Salem Rd., Greensburg
724-837-8832, Tuesday, June 4
8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

West Newton Senior Center
103 Main St., West Newton
724-872-4976, Friday, June 7
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Latrobe Senior Center
15 Avenue C, Latrobe
724-539-0237, Monday, June 10

8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Herminie Senior Center
101 Sewickley Ave., Herminie
724-446-3282, Friday, June 21
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Mt. Pleasant Senior Center

424 Washington St., Mt. Pleasant
724-547-4593, Monday, June 24
8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

New Florence Senior Center

216 Ligonier St., New Florence
724-235-2800, Wednesday, June 26
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Valley Senior Center

135 Kalassay Dr., Ligonier
724-238-7942, Wednesday, June 5
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Jeannette Senior Center

211 Gaskill St., Jeannette
724-527-3200, Thursday, June 20
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Avonmore Senior Center

458 Railroad St., Avonmore
724-697-4014, Friday, June 7
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

New Alexandria Senior Center

207 Main St., New Alexandria
724-668-7055, Wednesday, June 12
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Monessen Senior Center

1925 Grand Blvd., Monessen
724-684-6105, Friday, June 28
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

East Vandergrift Senior Center

400 McKinley Ave., East Vandergrift
724-568-2692, Thursday, June 6
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Area Agency on Aging**Monessen Satellite Office**

100 B 7th St., Monessen
724-684-3141, Wednesday, July 24

and Friday, August 2 and ongoing
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Area Agency on Aging**Troutman Building**

200 S. Main St., Greensburg
724-830-4444, Thursday, June 27
and Monday, August 19
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Derry Station

200 W. Second Ave., Derry
Friday, July 12
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church

200 Leger Rd., Mack Hall
N. Huntingdon
Tuesday, July 9
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Trafford Municipal

Christian Life Church
Route 130, Trafford
Wednesday, August 7
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

St. Barbara Church

Raymaley & Waugaman Rd.
Harrison City
Tuesday, July 23
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Cloverleaf Estates

200 Cloverleaf Circle, Delmont
Thursday, August 1
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Murrysville Senior Center

3091 Carson St., Murrysville
Tuesday, July 30
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Lower Burrell Manor

200 Sylvan Dr., Lower Burrell
Thursday, July 11
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Export Italian American Club

5930 Kennedy Ave., Export
Monday, July 15
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Scottdale Firehall

405 Porter Ave., Scottdale
Tuesday, July 2
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Allegheny Township

136 Community Building Rd.
Leechburg
Wednesday, July 17
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Level Green Community Building

123 Murrysville Road, Level Green
Thursday, July 25
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Delmont Fire Hall

2360 State Route 66, Delmont
Wednesday, July 10
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Norwin Community Resource Ctr.

231 Jennie Dr., N. Huntingdon
Thursday, July 18
9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

FOCUSING ON THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

Sometimes finding forgiveness for someone that has wronged us can be exceedingly difficult. We seem to enjoy stories of other people overcoming mistreatment with love and forgiveness, but trying to implement it in our lives reveals the difference between the idea of forgiveness and the reality of it.

It's been said that the real beneficiary of our forgiveness is us, rather than the one that wronged us, since the hatred and anger that must be kept in order to cling to unforgiveness can eat away at us over the long term. Here are some suggested steps to take to help find forgiveness.

- Realize that the hate you feel toward your adversary does not harm him or her in the slightest.
- Understand that the best revenge against

your adversary is to live a successful and happy life. The next best revenge is to turn their evil into something good.

- Make a list of any good things that have emerged as a result of the awful experience.
- Look for the helpers – think back to the people who have helped you in your life, and practice what you have learned from them.
- Be patient with yourself as you try to navigate your way out of the past pain you’ve been clinging to. It isn’t a quick process; you will make some missteps.
- Remember that the word “forgive” stems from the word “untie.”
- Learn how to balance trust with wisdom. Forgiveness is not acceptance of wrong behavior, and it doesn’t mean you should force yourself to trust someone that has wronged you, or even to ever interact with them again. If the person that wronged you is unrepentant, it would be foolish to put yourself in a place to be wronged again.
- Stop retelling “the story.”
- Retrain your thinking. When the evil actions of your adversary come to mind, try sending a

blessing his or her way instead of wishing them ill. The good and evil we send toward another often seems to have a rebounding effect.

- Prayer. If your belief system agrees with it, try asking the Man Upstairs for help to forgive.

FOODS FOR BRAIN POWER

Like every other system in the body, the brain needs good food. It uses 20 to 25% of the total energy a person consumes, and the better you feed the brain, the better it works. According to the New Jersey Medical College, these are the ten best foods for our brain.

- Low-fat milk or yogurt
- Eggs
- Lean meats, such as flank steak
- Chicken and other poultry
- Spinach and other leafy greens
- Whole-wheat bread
- Oranges
- Black beans and other legumes
- Enriched brown rice
- Salmon

FUN FISHING FACTS

- A goldfish can live up to 40 years.
- An octopus has three hearts.
- A starfish doesn’t have a brain. They can also have up to 16 arms.

- The stonefish, which lives off the coast of Australia, is the most poisonous fish in the world.
- The lung fish can live out of water for as long as four years.
- The leatherback is the biggest sea turtle, weighing as much as 1,500 pounds.
- Animals with really long lives include the Marion’s tortoise (150 years), the fin whale (115 years) and the deep-sea clam (100 years).
- The smallest fish in the world are the Pygmy Goby and the Luzon Goby, from the Philippines, which are only a half-inch long fully grown.
- At 188 decibels, the whistle of the Blue Whale is the loudest sound produced by any animal.
- There are over 25,000 identified species of fish on earth. That is more than all of the species of amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals combined. It is estimated that there remain at least 15,000 more fish species yet to be identified.
- The largest fish in the sea is the Great White Shark, which can reach fifty feet in length.

NATHAN'S FAMOUS JULY 4TH HOT DOG EATING COMPETITION

Every year on July 4th, on the corner of Surf and Stillwell Avenues in Coney Island, NY, there is a hot dog eating competition, widely considered to be the competitive eating equivalent of the Super Bowl. After a series of regional qualifiers throughout the country, a group of 16-20 world-class gluttons converge on Coney Island on Independence Day to see who can consume the most hot dogs in ten minutes, in front of a crowd of tens of thousands of spectators, as well as live television coverage.

The contest has been sponsored by Nathan's Famous Hot dogs since its inception almost a century ago. According to legend, on July 4, 1916, four immigrants had a hot dog eating contest at the Nathan's Famous stand on Coney Island to settle an argument about who was the most patriotic.

The current official world record holder is five-time champ Joey "Jaws" Chestnut, from San Jose, CA, who ate an amazing 68 hot dogs and buns in the 2009 competition. Unofficially, Takeru Kobayashi ate 69 dogs and buns in 2011 in ten minutes, during an exhibition that was held concurrently with live coverage of the July 4th Nathans event. He didn't compete in the event itself due to a contract dispute with MLE, the organization that runs the sport of competitive

eating. By eating alongside the live broadcast in front of a large crowd, Kobi proved to many that he was still one of the top eaters in the world.

Tune in to ESPN at 3 p.m. ET on July 4th to watch this year's contest.

REMEMBERING D-DAY JUNE 6, 1944

The D-Day operation of June 6, 1944 brought together the land, air and sea forces of the allied armies in what became known as the largest invasion force in human history. The operation, given the code name OVERLOAD, delivered five naval assault divisions to the beaches of Normandy, France.

The invasion force included 7,000 ships and a landing craft manned by over 195,000 naval personnel from eight allied countries. Almost 133,000 troops from England, Canada and the United States landed on D-Day. Casualties from the three countries during the landing numbered 10,300. By June 30th, over 850,000 men, 148,000 vehicles and 570,000 tons of supplies had landed on Normandy shores.

THE SENIORS' FUND

Honor the memory of a loved one or celebrate a special occasion with a gift to the Seniors' Fund. You will support our mission by enriching lives of the most needy, and the honoree will be notified that a tribute gift has been received.

All tribute gifts are tax-deductible and can be made payable to "Community Foundation of Westmoreland County – Seniors' Fund". Please send to the attention of Seniors' Fund Coordinator, Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging, 200 South Main Street, Greensburg, PA 15601.

PENNSYLVANIA SENIORLAW HELPLINE

The Pennsylvania SeniorLAW Helpline is a toll-free, state-wide, legal information advice and referral service for Pennsylvania senior citizens (60 years and older). It is a free and confidential telephone service, staffed by attorneys, Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Consumer problems (credit, debt, bankruptcy)
- Health care, including Medicare Part D
- Estate planning (wills, powers of attorney)
- Pensions (government and private)
- Family law (divorce, custody, domestic violence)
- Housing (landlord-tenant, deeds, utilities)

They provide interpretation services in 150 languages. PA SeniorLAW Helpline is a project of SeniorLAW Center in Philadelphia. Visit the site at www.seniorlawcenter.org or

email helpline@seniorlaw.org or call 1-877-727-7529. This project is made possible with generous support from Pennsylvania IOLTA and US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging.

REMEMBER TO TAKE YOUR PILLS

by The National Institutes of Health

We forget things every day, people's names, our keys or whether we locked the front door. But when it comes to taking your medicines, don't let your memory fail you. Taking medicines the right way could mean the difference between life and death. You can take simple steps to remember what medicines to take, and when to take them.

Unfortunately, aging often brings a gradual loss of memory, which can make it even harder to keep track of your medications. The more you know about your medicines and the more you talk to your doctor, the easier it will be to avoid problems.

Many experts recommend making a list of all the medications you need to take. For each medicine, include how much you need to take, the time of day you should take it, what it's for and the name of the doctor who prescribed it. You can turn this list into a daily checklist and post it in an obvious place in your house, like the refrigerator or your medicine cabinet.

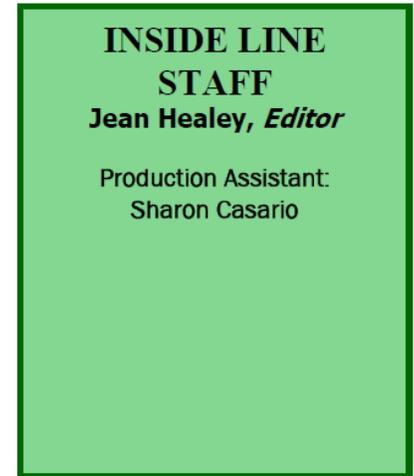
Taking your medicines should become part of your daily routine. For instance, you might take one medication every morning after you brush your teeth, and a different one at night before you climb into bed.

Try using pill boxes that have pills distributed into different compartments according to the day of the week and the time of day they should be taken. Carefully fill the pill organizer at the start of each week with the correct amount of medicines. Get a health professional, friend or relative to help if this task is confusing. You can also ask your doctor to try to give you the simplest medication regimen possible, maybe one-a-day dosing or perhaps combination medications so you won't have as many different medications to remember.

Technology can be helpful too. Cell phones, programmable wrist-watches and other types of timers can remind you when it's time to take your medications. You could also try a phone service or a scheduling program on the computer if you're usually near a phone or on the computer when it's time take your medicine. Some new technologies have timers on the medicine bottles, to remind you when it's time to take your medication. And for people who have the resources, new technologies allow a recording to go to a doctor's office, or to a loved one's home, to let them

know whether a person is taking medication as directed.

We live in an age where there are a lot of good medications that can help a lot of conditions; but medications must be taken as prescribed, and always in careful coordination with your health care providers.



INSIDE LINE is published bimonthly by the Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging, 200 South Main Street, Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601 (Phone 830-4444), the Westmoreland County Commissioners and the PA Department of Aging.