



# *SOCIAL WORK NEWSLETTER*

*March 2015*

## **Dialysis Support Group**

High Desert Kidney Hope's dialysis support group is held at the Desert Community bank on the corner of Silica and Hesperia Road. Every month it is held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday from 6 to 7:30pm. This month, the groups will be held: **March 10<sup>th</sup> and March 24<sup>th</sup> from 6 to 7:30pm.**

## **Managing Your Fluids**

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of dialysis reported is managing fluid intake. For persons on dialysis, there is limited urine output and the fluids can build up quickly and damage your heart and other critical tissue over time. To feel your best and reduce risk of heart strain try not to gain more than 2-3 kilograms (kg) between treatments, including weekends. For persons who can still make some urine, limit fluid intake to 48 ounces daily. For those who no longer urinate, limit fluids to 32 ounces a day. Fluids can come in many forms and some that are hidden:

- 1) Pasta/Rice
- 2) Soup
- 3) Fruit
- 4) Ice
- 5) Jello
- 6) Popsicles
- 7) Yogurt
- 8) Drinks of any kind

Tips to help control Thirst:

- 1) Avoid salty or spicy food
- 2) Avoid sugar
- 3) Suck on frozen fruit like grapes, peaches or strawberries
- 4) Chew sugar free gum or sugar free hard candy
- 5) Use a breath spray
- 6) If you are diabetic keep your sugar level in a healthy range

## **Solutions for High Utility Bills**

Almost every dialysis patient should be receiving the Medical Baseline discount on electricity and Gas. This is for persons with life threatening illnesses or those using equipment for medical stability (such as an oxygen machine).

For those with lower income ranges, additionally there is the CARE discount on both gas and electric. Those receiving food stamps, SSI, Medi-cal are automatic qualifiers but income can be even greater than those levels. For example a couple will qualify at 30,000 annually.

There is also the weatherization program through Southern California Edison which will ensure your home (or rental) is running at maximum efficiency. Windows are repaired, sealing around doors and outlets will be done. All of this at no charge. Also see their free appliance exchanges, get new energy efficient appliances for income qualified individuals.

## **Advanced Arrangements**

While almost none of us are comfortable with the idea of being incapacitated or even of dying, unfortunately it is an inevitable part of life. So many times friends and family are caught in a situation where they are not sure of their loved one's wishes.

We urge you to spare your friends and loved ones the burden and ensure that your wants are carried out in the event you cannot choose, so:

- 1) Please complete your Advanced Directives
- 2) Please complete your final arrangements.

There are inexpensive, even free ways to prepare as long as it is done in advance!

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### **Low Vision and Blindness Services**

.Blindness Support Services (BSS). This program offers training for 1) orientation and mobility 2) travelling 3) independent living 3) computers 4) employment and job development 5) parenting and 6) peer support. Call them if you or a loved one have limited vision (951) 341-9244.

The Braille Institute for blind training, equipment and services including books on tape with equipment and books sent to your home at no charge. (800) 808-2555.

Vocational Rehabilitation also offers free blind services, training and equipment for those looking to rejoin the work force but have visual impairments. They also provide training and education for other disabilities to join the work force. Call them at (760) 243-0830.

### **Incontinent Supplies**

For persons who have Medi-Cal, incontinent supplies are provided at no charge. Whether they are ordered through your IHSS worker, your Doctor or if you contact the company directly, Shield Healthcare is a Medi-Cal Provider for Incontinent supplies. So if you are experiencing bladder or bowel control problems, call Shield at 800.765.8775.

### **Feeling Bored on Dialysis?**

There are books on tape available in the nursing station, and more can be ordered. Look through the selection available and talk to the social workers if there is a book you would like to listen to on the player. Also, word games, magazines and newsletters are available to read. Consider keeping your mind active and engaged for a healthier you.

### **Caregivers of Persons with Stroke/Dementia/Parkinsons/TBI**

If you are a family member who cares for someone with a brain disease, there is help available. The Inland Caregiver Resource Center(800) 675-6694 provides support, respite, resources and education. They have conferences for caregivers and can provide someone to come and stay while you get away for a bit. Contact them today, caring for a loved one with brain impairment can be overwhelming. There is help out there.

### **Stay Active**

Exercise is a key ingredient in mental and physical health. Do what you can for activity. Whether it is arm lifts, leg lifts, curls, standing and balancing or running. Whatever you can physically do will improve your outcomes. Physical exercise improves mood, sleep regularity, appetite and physical independence. Ask your doctor what exercise you can do today.

### **Humor**

# Dialysis is A Pain in the

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(Arm, but I like the way you think)

