

We're Here to Help

Programs and Services for People Living with Kidney Disease



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A diagnosis of kidney disease can be overwhelming, completely unexpected, and its treatment can be difficult to understand and manage. The Kidney Foundation is here to help you. Our regional Branches and Chapters across the country offer information and resource referral, educational materials, short-term financial assistance, and peer support. Regardless of where you live in Canada, these services are available to you.

Information and Resource Material

While Foundation volunteers and staff cannot give direct medical advice, your local Kidney Foundation office can help you if you have a question related to kidney disease and its treatment. Kidney Foundation Branch offices can offer advice and support on accessing services within the health care system, accessing information from other community supports and resources, and help you to develop skills for self-advocacy.

Model(s) are a depiction of people with kidney disease.

Educational Material

The Kidney Foundation provides educational material to people with kidney disease, to dialysis units and health centres, and to the general public. These materials are provided free to anyone living with kidney disease and can be obtained from your dialysis unit or your local Kidney Foundation office.

The comprehensive patient manuals, *Living with Reduced Kidney Function* and *Living with Kidney Failure*, are valuable sources of information on how kidneys work, different types of kidney disease, treatment options, healthy eating, and more. An audio version is also available in English and French for the visually impaired. The Foundation also produces a *Living with Kidney Disease* DVD, available in English, French, Chinese, and Punjabi.

Educational brochures and fact sheets are available in print and electronic formats. A complete listing is available on the Foundation's website at www.kidney.ca.

Short-Term Financial Assistance

Short-term and emergency financial assistance may be available to cover medical-related expenses associated with kidney disease and its treatment. This assistance is provided only when all other sources of funding have been exhausted. To find out if you are eligible, speak to your social worker at the unit or hospital where you are receiving treatment, or contact your local Kidney Foundation office for more information about this program.

KIDNEY CONNECT

Peer Support Program

Because a diagnosis of kidney disease can be emotionally as well as physically challenging, The Kidney Foundation offers KIDNEY CONNECT, a peer support program designed to provide the kind of one-on-one support that you or your family may need. In this program, anyone touched by kidney disease, including people living with kidney disease, or their friends and family, and those who are considering donating one of their kidneys to someone in need, can be paired with trained volunteers who have had their own first-hand experience coping with kidney disease or living donation.

This program lets you speak with someone who understands what it is like to live with kidney disease and who is willing to share their own experiences with you. To connect online with other people living with - and affected by - kidney disease, visit www.kidneyconnect.ca.

In addition to one-on-one peer support and KIDNEY CONNECT online, in some provinces, there are peer support groups that meet and discuss a variety of topics of interest to the group participants. Groups are facilitated by trained peer support facilitators.

For more information, call the KIDNEY CONNECT Peer Support helpline at 1-866-390-7337 (PEER), or your local branch of The Kidney Foundation.

Kidney Community Kitchen

Diet plays a significant role in the management of chronic kidney disease (CKD) to prevent the build-up of toxins that healthy kidneys normally remove and to reduce the workload of the kidneys. Proper food and fluid choices can contribute to delaying the need for dialysis treatment.

The CKD diet is very complex and differs from person to person based on stage of kidney disease, blood work results, medications, additional medical conditions, and other dietary needs. However, the common elements are restricted sodium, potassium, phosphorous, and high or low protein needs. Grocery shopping, label reading, and preparing renal-friendly meals can feel like a full-time job. It can be difficult to eat out and still control sodium, potassium, phosphorous, and protein intake. Transitioning to the CKD diet can be a stressful time and people may miss their favourite foods or feel left out of holiday meal traditions and celebrations.

The goal of Kidney Community Kitchen is to empower its users through information and resources to take ownership of their condition and manage it to the best of their ability. Additionally, the site aims to make food and cooking as easy and fun as possible for a population that has been told many foods are off-limits. For more information visit www.kidneycommunitykitchen.ca.

Other Services

From time to time, and in different regions of the country, the Foundation may also offer other services, depending on local community needs and resources. To find out what specific services are available in your area, contact your closest Foundation office. Some services which are more commonly available include:

■ Educational Symposia

Some branches and chapters hold educational workshops, which are popular forums for those with kidney disease, their families, friends, and members of the medical community. Here you can learn more about kidney disease, new research, and treatments. You will also have a chance to discuss important lifestyle issues and practical matters.

■ Newsletters

Several Kidney Foundation offices publish patient newsletters which feature helpful articles about living well with kidney disease, updates on promising research, and items of local interest.

■ Loan Services

Where available, interest-free loans are offered to patients to help cover the cost of medical items and services such as out-of-country dialysis. You are required to sign a Promissory Note guaranteeing to repay the Foundation within a specified period of time.

Multimedia Libraries

Several offices maintain multimedia libraries where you can borrow books and videos on kidney disease, treatments, and related topics. These branches will also mail books and other materials upon request.

Scholarships and Bursaries

Some locations provide scholarships and bursaries to make it easier for those with kidney disease to receive further education and training.

Summer Camps

Certain locations sponsor camps for children and adults with kidney failure. The camps look after the special treatment and dietary needs of people on dialysis, while offering an outdoor camping experience they may not otherwise enjoy.

How Services Are Funded

The Kidney Foundation relies on the generous support of corporations, foundations, and members of the Canadian public to make the delivery of these programs and services possible.



OUR VISION

The Kidney Foundation of Canada is committed to achieving excellent kidney health, optimal quality of life, and a cure for kidney disease.

OUR MISSION

The Kidney Foundation of Canada is the national volunteer organization committed to eliminating the burden of kidney disease through:

- Funding and stimulating innovative research for better treatments and a cure;
- Providing education and support to prevent kidney disease in those at risk and empower those with kidney disease to optimize their health status;
- Advocating for improved access to high quality healthcare;
- Increasing public awareness and commitment to advancing kidney health and organ donation.

For further information, or to help us in our efforts, please contact The Kidney Foundation office in your area. You can also visit our website at kidney.ca.

This material is available in accessible formats upon request by contacting info@kidney.ca or calling 1-800-361-7494.