



# KIDNEYS R US

FROM THE  
QIRN3 PATIENT ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE

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## HOLIDAY EATING FOR DIALYSIS PATIENTS

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The holidays are fast approaching. Many people look forward to the holiday season with a feeling of joy, anticipating good times with family, friends, and the enjoyment of delicious food. For dialysis patients, however, these times are often accompanied by anxiety, confusion, and the question, "How will I stick to my diet and still enjoy my favorite holiday foods?" Here are some good food choices, followed by tips for controlling potassium, phosphorus, salt, and fluid during the holidays.

### Good Choices for the Holidays

Main Dishes		
Turkey	Prime Rib	Roast Pork
Roast Beef	Chicken	Fish
Desserts		
Angel Food Cake	Whipped Topping	Blackberry Pie
Sugar Cookies	Blueberry Pie	Peach Pie
Apple Pie	Cherry Pie	
Side Dishes		
Green Beans	Rice	Corn
Cauliflower	Green Peas	Noodles
Mixed Vegetables	Homemade stuffing	
Breads		
White Bread	Dinner Rolls	Flour Tortillas
Salads		
Mixed Green Salad	Cranberry Sauce	Cole Slaw
Jello Salad	Pasta Salad	

### Potassium

- Try to select more low potassium foods and only small portions of high potassium foods such as pumpkin pie, pecan pie, mincemeat pie, yams, sweet potatoes, white potatoes, nuts, chocolate, squash, gingerbread, and dried fruit.
- If you are planning on having a high potassium food at your holiday dinner, don't eat any other high potassium foods until you've been dialyzed again.
- Leach potatoes to lower potassium content:
  - Peel the potatoes and cut into small pieces.
  - Soak in large amount of water (5 cups of water for 1 cup of potatoes) for at least 4 hours or overnight.
  - Drain the water and rinse.
  - Cook in a large pot of water until tender.
  - Drain the potatoes and prepare.

### Phosphorus

- Try to limit high phosphorus foods such as cheese, baked beans, macaroni and cheese, nuts, egg nog, and ice cream.
- Always carry your phosphorus binders with you.
- If you will be eating over a longer period of time, spread your phosphorus binders out. Take some before the meal, and some after.
- If you are eating larger portions than usual, you will need more phosphorus binders.
- Take binders with all snacks and meals containing phosphorus.

### Sodium

- Many traditional foods are also high in sodium. These foods include ham, self-basting turkeys, prepared gravy and dressing, and corned beef.
- Make your own gravy and dressing.
- At cocktail parties, nibble on lower salt foods such as crackers, pretzels, raw vegetables, or fruit.
- Eliminate salt from recipes.

### Fluid

- Watch out for extra fluid. A few cups of punch can add up quickly.
- Plan ahead. If you know you'll be out and drinking more, drink less before and after. Keep fluid gains controlled prior to the holiday so you are starting out at your dry weight and are not already fluid overloaded.
- When eating out, ask the waiter not to refill your

glass.

- Remember that jello and gravy count as fluid.

### General Tips

- Do not skip meals during the holiday season. You will end up eating more later
- Carry appropriate snacks with you when doing holiday shopping and errands.
- When eating out, remember to make wise food choices.
- Talk to your dietitian for suggestions of what to eat at your favorite restaurant.
- When in doubt about a certain food, keep the serving size to ½ cup.

The holiday season should be an enjoyable time for everyone. Following these guidelines can help make choosing appropriate foods less stressful for dialysis patients. Remember, all foods can be eaten in moderation. Have a happy and safe holiday season!

## Have you received your flu vaccination?

It's that time of year again.....flu season. How can you protect yourself from the serious side effects of the flu? **A vaccination is the best way to protect yourself and prevent catching the flu.** Other ways to protect yourself include frequent hand washing and the use of anti-bacterial hand sanitizers. Not touching your mouth, eyes and nose can also help prevent the spread of germs into your body.

The flu vaccine is available at your dialysis center as well as your primary care physician's office. You can also get the vaccine at many local pharmacies. The important thing is not where you get it but that you get it as early in the flu season as possible. Medicare covers the cost of the flu vaccine so cost should not be

an issue for most dialysis patients. If you have private insurance, most plans also cover the vaccine. Check with your insurance carrier if you have any questions.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend annual flu vaccination for all individuals 6 months of age or older and especially for anyone with a chronic medical condition such as renal disease. Renal patients should receive the flu shot or the inactivated influenza vaccine. Do not take the live attenuated nasal vaccine (nasal spray) as it could cause serious side-effects.

The flu can be very dangerous to a renal patient due to serious complications such as pneumonia. The best way to ensure a happy holiday season and prevent the flu not only for yourself but for your family is to get vaccinated. Remember the old saying; an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

#### How to Contact QIRN3

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Happy Holidays from the PAC!



**Did You Know?** Beginning January 1, 2012, your dialysis unit is required to post its CMS Quality Incentive Certificate in a prominent location. This certificate will tell you how well your facility did in meeting three clinical measures (one in adequacy of dialysis and two in anemia management) during 2010.