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ISSUE 3 | MARCH | 2010



DO YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT A SPECIFIC TOPIC?
SUBMIT SUGGESTIONS TO:

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203-387-9332

HELPFUL TIPS TO EMPOWER
DIALYSIS PATIENTS

Kidney Chronicles

To Receive a Smile, Give One Away.

Care for Your Teeth and Smile Freely Today!



Keeping a healthy smile when you have kidney failure may take some extra effort. The type of dialysis treatment you choose can affect the health of your teeth and gums. Many symptoms and complications associated with renal disease can affect dental treatment, such as anemia, hypertension and heart disease, dry mouth, periodontal (gum) disease and inflammation of the mouth and salivary glands. Some of these symptoms are caused by medications and other treatment regimens. Skeletal changes may also occur because calcium cannot be absorbed correctly in the body. Good dental hygiene is also important in kidney transplantation. A person must undergo a thorough oral exam

before being considered for a transplant. Infections from gum disease or advanced tooth decay can prevent someone from being eligible or delay the transplant until dental work is completed.

To help your teeth, the American Dental Association (ADA) recommends:

- Brushing twice a day to remove excess plaque and acids that can harm your tooth enamel.
- Flossing once a day to clear the excess plaque and food debris, preventing the build up that can lead to tartar. This also keeps your gums healthy.
- Visiting your dentist twice a year for checkups - A professional

teeth cleaning can help ensure that your gums remain healthy and help prevent problems tartar can cause. If going to the dentist makes you nervous, visit www.dentalfearcentral.org to help you overcome your fears.

To set up an appointment with a dentist speak with your social worker at your dialysis unit. Your social worker can also talk with you about other options to receive dental services if you have low income or no dental insurance.

Additional Resources:

<http://www.homedialysis.org/files/pdf/resources/tom/200807.pdf>

<http://www.davita.com/kidney-disease/complications/a/715>



Patient Safety Awareness Week (PSAW)

PSAW (March 7-13, 2010) is a national education and awareness-building campaign for improving patient safety at the local level. Healthcare organizations across the country are encouraged to plan events to promote patient safety within their own organizations. Educational activities are centered on educating patients on how to become involved in their own health care, as well as working to build partnerships with their patient community. **Ask your dialysis facility if they are participating in this initiative. If not, suggest they visit <http://www.npsf.org/hp/psaw/> for useful tools and resources.**