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AKF IN ACTION

Fighting kidney disease and helping people live healthier lives.

Connect with us:



Find prescription assistance programs for common kidney medicines on AKF's website

Living with kidney failure means taking many prescription medicines. A Prescription Assistance Program (PAP) can help people afford their medicines by offering discounts or coupons for free or low-cost prescriptions. On AKF's new prescription assistance programs page, you can find a list of PAPs and resources that may help lower your medicine costs.

In addition, the page provides information about a variety of issues related to prescriptions and prescription assistance, including:

- Which kidney medicines have assistance programs
- How to read your prescription bottle
- The difference between brand name and generic medicines
- How to access prescription medicines

- Information about medicines that are specifically used to treat:
 - Anemia
 - Bone and mineral imbalances
 - High blood pressure and heart health medicines
 - Diabetes
 - High potassium (hyperkalemia)
 - High phosphorus (hyperphosphatemia)
 - The immune system and viral infections in kidney transplant recipients

Visit AKF's prescription assistance programs webpage at [kidneyfund.org/paps](https://www.kidneyfund.org/paps).

Please note: This resource is for informational purposes only; always talk with your doctor before making any changes to your medicines.

Explore the latest kidney disease research on AKF's website

Treatments and advanced technologies are changing what's possible for future generations of people with kidney disease. On AKF's new kidney health innovations webpage, you can find information about a variety of kidney-related issues, such as:

Developments in kidney transplants

Scientists are exploring new ways to make transplants more accessible through methods such as:

- **Artificial kidneys.** Scientists are working on developing lab-grown kidneys and new machines to give people with kidney failure options other than going on dialysis and waiting for a kidney transplant. Artificial kidneys grown from a patient's own cells are designed to work like real kidneys without the risk of rejection.
- **Genetically modified pig kidney transplants (xenotransplantation).** Xenotransplantation uses cells, tissues or organs from animals to treat medical conditions in humans. In 2025, the FDA approved the first clinical trials to genetically modify pig kidneys for people with kidney failure to reduce the risk of rejection and help them function in the human body.
- **Teaching the immune system to accept transplants.** A new trial is testing a cell therapy that could help kidney transplant recipients live without anti-rejection drugs. The treatment uses the donor's stem cells to retrain the immune system to accept the new kidney as its own.
- **3D Kidneys.** Researchers use 3D bioprinters to create living models of skin, cartilage and organ tissue using medical imaging and patient-specific cells. These tissue models help scientists study disease, test treatments and develop future transplant solutions.
- **Medicines to prevent transplant rejection.** A medicine known as imlifidase addresses the needs of patients who experience long waits on the transplant list. Studies show this medicine can help their bodies accept a new kidney, making transplants possible for those who need them most.
- **Testing donated kidneys.** The new Room Temperature Machine Perfusion device could make more kidneys available for transplant, as this device keeps kidneys healthy longer and lets doctors test how well they work before surgery.

New opportunities in dialysis

For many people with kidney failure, dialysis is a necessary but challenging part of life. New technologies are being developed to improve the dialysis experience by making treatment more efficient, convenient and accessible.

These technologies include:

- **The Holly™ system.** This implantable dialysis device is designed to work continuously inside the body. It has received FDA Breakthrough Device Designation.
- **Portable dialysis machines.** Researchers are currently developing a new membrane technology to create an easily carried dialysis device as small as a smartphone. Powered by the patient's blood pressure, this would dramatically improve quality of life by reducing the time spent on traditional dialysis.
- **Home hemodialysis.** Technological advancements have led to the development of user-friendly home hemodialysis machines that are equipped with remote monitoring capabilities.

For more information on these and other innovations, visit [kidneyfund.org/kidney-health-innovations](https://www.kidneyfund.org/kidney-health-innovations). As these developments and technologies are all currently undergoing research, AKF will keep you informed about how these innovations may be advancing.

Kidney Action Week 2026: Supporting you every step of the way, from diagnosis to transplant

From March 2-5, AKF held its seventh annual Kidney Action Week® (KAW), a free, virtual event that brought together members of the kidney community to learn from experts and hear stories from people living with kidney disease. The theme of this year's conference was "Supporting you every step of the way: from diagnosis to transplant," and included four days of sessions featuring nephrologists, genetic counselors, renal dietitians and patient advocates. Speakers discussed a variety of topics, including:

- Your diagnosis and first steps
- Managing your kidney disease
- Considering your treatment options for kidney failure
- What's new in kidney disease?

Each day of KAW, which was held during Kidney Month, featured a Q&A session so that participants could get their questions answered about topics such as genetic counseling, kidney-friendly eating and kidney transplants.

If you weren't able to attend KAW, you can watch recordings of the sessions by visiting bit.ly/413wRZy.

What the new HHS dietary guidelines mean for Americans living with kidney disease

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently released the new Dietary Guidelines for Americans (available at cdn.realfood.gov/DGA.pdf).

Here's what these new guidelines mean for people living with kidney disease:

Whole foods focus

The new guidelines place a strong focus on consuming whole foods. This means choosing foods that are closer to their natural form and less processed. Some examples of whole foods include fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean meats and seafood. Eating whole foods can be especially helpful when you're living with kidney disease, as processed foods tend to have more sodium and phosphorus.

Protein

When you have kidney disease, it is important to talk with your doctor and/or dietitian about how much protein is right for you.

The new guidelines emphasize more animal-based proteins. While some plant proteins contain lower amounts of essential amino acids on their own, eating a variety of both animal and plant proteins can help you build a balanced, kidney-friendly eating pattern. For more information, visit kidneyfund.org/protein-supplements.

Healthy fats

Since people with kidney disease are at a higher risk for heart disease, it is important to choose more unsaturated fats, which are healthier than saturated fats. Unsaturated fat sources include olive oil, fish and seafood, avocados and nuts and seeds. To learn more about how saturated fat impacts kidney and heart health, visit kidneyfund.org/trimming-fat.

Alcohol

The current dietary guidelines recommend drinking alcohol in moderation. However, alcohol may not be safe for people living with kidney failure, so it is important to discuss how much alcohol you can drink with your health care team. You can learn more about alcohol and kidney disease at kidneyfund.org/alcohol.

Whole grains and fiber

The guidelines recommend two to four servings per day of whole grains. Some whole grains are higher in potassium and phosphorus, but your body only absorbs approximately 40-70% of phosphorus from plant foods. A dietitian can help you choose whole grains that fit your needs.

Fruits and vegetables

The new guidelines recommend three servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit per day. People with kidney disease can and should eat fruits and vegetables. However, you should talk with a dietitian to help you choose the best options and preparation methods.

To read AKF's blog post on the guidelines, visit kidneyfund.org/hss-diet-guidelines.

Please note: the nutritional needs of each person vary, with people in kidney failure having different needs than someone who is in an earlier stage of kidney disease. It is important to talk to your doctor and/or dietitian about how to turn these general guidelines into a kidney-friendly eating plan that works best for you.

The 2026 HIPP guidelines are now available

The 2026 Health Insurance Premium Program (HIPP) guidelines have been released. In these guidelines, you can find information on program eligibility criteria, the application process and grant payments.

The HIPP guidelines are located in the Learning Center of AKF's Grants Management System (GMS) at gms.kidneyfund.org, as well as in the "Get assistance" section of AKF's main website: kidneyfund.org/hipp-patient-handbook.

In addition to reading the guidelines, HIPP recipients must read the HIPP patient handbook and information materials. These materials are available through GMS and may also be obtained through your renal professional, by calling AKF's Grant Services department, or at KidneyFund.org.

Please take time to read and familiarize yourself with this important information.

How to contact Grant Services:

Please do not send messages, voicemails or emails to other departments to request a call back; instead, use the communication methods listed below:

By phone: Call us at (800) 795-3226 Monday—Thursday from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m ET to speak with a live representative.

GMS Assist: Visit GMSassist.com to schedule a phone appointment for a day and time that is convenient for you. All times available are in ET.

Through GMS: Message us through your GMS account at gms.KidneyFund.org. Be sure to also check the "Information" and "FAQ" tabs for more updated information.

Online: Visit KidneyFund.org to learn more about AKF's financial assistance programs, or email us at registration@kidneyfund.org if you are having issues registering on GMS.

The connection between your gut microbiome and your kidneys

Inside your digestive system lives a community of bacteria, which make up your gut microbiome. These bacteria play an important role in supporting digestion, like breaking down food and supporting your immune system by protecting your body from harmful bacteria. When you are healthy, your gut microbiome has a diverse and balanced mix of bacteria. But when the wrong mix of bacteria takes over your digestive system, there can be consequences to your health, like digestive issues, inflammation, reduced immunity, increased risk for heart disease and kidney disease, and poorer quality of life.

The kidneys and the gut microbiome are connected through a "gut-kidney axis." With kidney disease, the kidneys aren't able to filter waste products like uremic toxins from the blood, and these substances can begin to build up in the body. These waste products can leak into the gut, causing changes to the balance of healthy bacteria. With this imbalance of the gut microbiome, "bad" bacteria take over the digestive tract and produce more uremic toxins and inflammatory molecules that can cause the gut to become "leaky."

With a leaky gut, many of these uremic toxins and inflammatory molecules reenter the bloodstream, putting additional strain on the kidneys, which in turn leads to worsening kidney disease. As kidney function gets worse, it may lead to kidney failure, which requires dialysis or a transplant to live. Unfortunately, as effective as dialysis is today, not all these waste products and uremic toxins are able to be effectively removed through dialysis and can continue to build up, further worsening quality of life.

The gut-kidney axis can be tough to rebalance, but researchers are studying ways to support the gut microbiome. One way is to reintroduce healthy bacteria that can break down and remove uremic waste products that build up. You can support a healthy microbiome by introducing the following into your eating plan, either through food choices or with dietary supplements:

- **Prebiotics** are non-digestible plant fibers that feed the existing "good" bacteria in your digestive system, allowing them to grow and thrive. They are found in high-fiber foods like garlic, onions, leeks, asparagus, artichokes, berries, oats, soybeans and whole grains.
- **Probiotics** are live bacteria and yeasts that introduce "good" bacteria to your gut microbiome. They are found naturally in fermented foods and drinks. Some sources of probiotics include yogurt made with live and active cultures, sauerkraut, kimchi, pickles, fermented soy products like miso and tempeh, and kombucha.
- **Synbiotics** are a combination of both probiotics and prebiotics and are available in dietary supplements or by combining foods (for example, eating asparagus with miso or combining yogurt with berries).

In general, a balanced gut microbiome is associated with multiple health benefits, including prevention and management of gastrointestinal disease, improved symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome, positive impacts on brain health and reduced risk of heart disease and obesity, all impacting one's quality of life and how long you live.

The benefits of probiotics and prebiotics in people with chronic kidney disease and kidney failure is currently undergoing research. Studies have shown that certain probiotics may support reduced buildup and production of waste products like creatinine and uremic toxins, but more research is required to fully show how this impacts your health. If you are thinking about making changes to what you eat or drink, or starting prebiotic or probiotic supplements, talk to your doctor or dietitian who knows your medical history and can provide you with personalized advice.

This article is sponsored by Kibow Biotech, which produces Renadyl®, a probiotic and prebiotic dietary supplement specifically designed to support kidney health in people with chronic kidney disease and end-stage kidney disease.



AKF Staff Spotlight



Name: Jon Hoffman

Hometown: Stafford, VA

What do you do at AKF?

I am the senior director of state policy and advocacy. In that role, I lead the state advocacy team and work in 17 states in the mid-Atlantic and northeast regions of the country.

I represent AKF to state legislators, regulators and media and work to improve and pass state laws for people with kidney disease and their families.

Why are you passionate about fighting kidney disease?

In the nearly four years I've been with AKF, I've met with and heard the stories of hundreds of people fighting kidney disease. There are challenges to address to make life better for those folks and their families and working every day to try and pass legislation to do that is a very rewarding experience.

What is the best part of your job?

I cover 17 states across the mid-Atlantic and northeast, so there is always something cooking and always an opportunity to learn and educate legislators on the work that is needed to help families who are fighting kidney disease. I get to travel to state capitals that I probably would otherwise never visit and I love finding out during meetings that legislators have a connection to kidney disease or even have personally donated a kidney.

What are your favorite hobbies outside of work?

I like to chase around my almost 6-year-old daughter and I spend too much time doing a podcast about the worst team in Major League Soccer. I am also stubbornly refusing to admit to aging, and I play baseball and am about to pick ice hockey back up. You can find me on a couch with multiple bags of ice on my joints.

Kidney Kitchen®

This and other recipes can be found at kitchen.kidneyfund.org.

Turkey Fajitas

Makes: 10 fajitas

Serving size: 1 fajita

Recipe contributed by Satellite Healthcare.



Prep time: 25 min

Cook Time: 20 min

Marinade time: 3 hours

Nutrition Facts

(1 serving = 1 fajita)

Calories = 239
Carbohydrates = 24 g
Sugar = 3 g
Fiber = 2 g
Calcium = 91 mg
Fat = 6 g
Saturated Fat = 2 g

Trans Fat = 0 g
Protein = 18 g
Phosphorus = 220 mg
Cholesterol = 41 mg
Sodium = 411 mg
Potassium = 257 mg

Ingredients for fajita

1-pound boneless turkey breast
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 garlic clove, minced
1 teaspoon chili powder
2 tablespoons lime juice

1 tablespoon fresh cilantro, chopped
1 tablespoon olive oil
10 7-inch flour tortillas
3 cups lettuce, shredded
½ cup full fat sour cream

Ingredients for salsa

1 cup tomato, chopped
2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped
1 tablespoon red onion, chopped
¼ teaspoon garlic, minced



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit
2. Sprinkle turkey with pepper, garlic, chili powder, lime juice, 1 tablespoon cilantro and oil. Turn to coat. Cover and marinate in refrigerator for at least 3 hours.
3. To make salsa, combine tomato, 2 tablespoons cilantro, onion and ¼ teaspoon minced garlic in a small bowl. Let stand for 1 hour.
4. Cook turkey in oven for 12 to 20 minutes, depending on size of the breast. Internal temperature of turkey should be 165 degrees Fahrenheit. Let rest 5 minutes before slicing.
5. Wrap tortillas in aluminum foil and place in a warm oven for 8 minutes.
6. Transfer turkey to a cutting board and cut into strips.
7. In each tortilla, wrap 1 ½ ounces of turkey (about 3 tablespoons), 1 ½ tablespoons salsa, 1/3 cup lettuce and 2 teaspoons sour cream.



Cooking Tip

Add in colorful peppers for some variety.



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Rockville, MD 20852
800.638.8299

[KidneyFund.org](https://www.kidneyfund.org)

AKF is fighting on all fronts as the nation's leading kidney nonprofit. Sign-up to receive our monthly e-newsletter to get the latest updates at [KidneyFund.org/sign-up](https://www.kidneyfund.org/sign-up).



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How to donate to support the kidney community today

Your donation helps the American Kidney Fund fight kidney disease and support millions of patients in living healthier lives. 96¢ of every dollar donated goes directly to patient support and kidney disease programs.

You can give in any of the following ways:

OPTION 1: Donate by mail

Mail your check or cash gift to:

American Kidney Fund
11921 Rockville Pike, Suite 300
Rockville, MD 20852

OPTION 2: Donate online or over the phone

Visit [KidneyFund.org](https://www.kidneyfund.org) or call us at (800) 638-8299 and press 1 twice.

OPTION 3: Make a legacy gift

Making a gift in your will or living trust, known as a bequest, can guarantee that your legacy endures. Your gift may be a specific dollar amount, a percentage of your estate or the remainder after all other provisions are specified. AKF offers a free online resource to help you write your legal will at no personal cost. Please visit [KidneyFund.org/freewill2026](https://www.kidneyfund.org/freewill2026) to get started.

OPTION 4: KidneyNation

Start your own online fundraiser, community event, corporate fundraiser or charity live stream: [KidneyNation.org](https://www.kidneyfund.org/kidneynation.org).



CUT HERE

Please return the slip below (along with any checks) to:

American Kidney Fund
11921 Rockville Pike, Suite 300
Rockville, MD 20852

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Check enclosed (please make payable to American Kidney Fund)

Credit Card

One-time

Monthly

MasterCard

American Express

Visa

Discover

Credit card #: _____

Expiration date: _____

Cardholder's Signature: _____

Cardholder's Name (print): _____

Here are two additional ways to give to AKF:

Partners for Change

Join our Partners for Change community, a group of dedicated American Kidney Fund monthly supporters who are truly partners in every sense of the word. Your regular, monthly gift will support prevention efforts to stop kidney disease before it starts and fund programs that enable people with kidney disease to lead healthier lives.

Monthly giving is the most cost-efficient way to deliver your support to AKF because it allows us to reduce our mailings and other fundraising campaigns. To show our appreciation for your generous, regular commitment to AKF, you'll also receive some special benefits:

- You will receive regular updates about AKF's programs to support kidney patients and those at risk for kidney disease.
- A summary receipt of your donations for the previous year each January
- A personal Partners for Change representative to answer your questions

To sign up, please call 1-800-638-8299 (and press 1 twice) or visit us at [kidneyfund.org](https://www.kidneyfund.org).



Vehicle donation program

Has your vehicle seen better days? Give your old ride new life by donating it to help people fight kidney disease and live healthier lives. By donating your used car, truck, boat, or RV, you can be assured that your contribution will be used to fund critical services and programs for the individuals we help.

There is no charge to have your vehicle picked up from your home, work, or auto shop, and next-day pickup is available. To donate, call our vehicle donation processor, Car Program Inc., at 1-800-936-4356.

Even non-working cars can make a difference, so please keep the American Kidney Fund in mind when you are ready to say goodbye to your old vehicle!

