



The
Kidney
Society

News

Issue No: 248 May/ June/ July 2026

Supporting your journey to better kidney health — every step of the way.



CLIENT SERVICES TEAM



Jack: Community Health Educator

Jack is our Community Health Educator and his role here is all about making kidney health easier to understand, translating medical language into something our people can connect with.



Kirsty: Social Worker

Kirsty is our health social worker. With a background in social work and postgraduate study in health science, she is dedicated to improving outcomes for those affected by kidney disease.



Vanessa: Wellness Educator

Vanessa walks alongside the kidney community, supporting clients on their wellness journey through movement, lifestyle guidance, and meaningful kōrero (talk). Whether it's a stretch, a stroll, or a good yarn, she's here to uplift your hauora (wellbeing).



Gina: Client Services Manager

Gina keeps both the office and community dialysis homes running smoothly. Staying in close communication with the team is key, and she finds the work both dynamic and deeply fulfilling.

COMMUNITY DIALYSIS HOUSE TEAM



Jenny: Community Dialysis Assistant

Jenny supports the day-to-day running of three community dialysis homes, making sure clients feel safe, supported, and comfortable - truly "a home away from home."



Nathaniel: Maintenance Technician

Nathaniel maintains our three dialysis houses and the office, ensuring clean, welcoming spaces for everyone.

THE KIDNEY SOCIETY: WHO, WHAT, WHERE.



ADMIN AND OPERATIONS TEAM



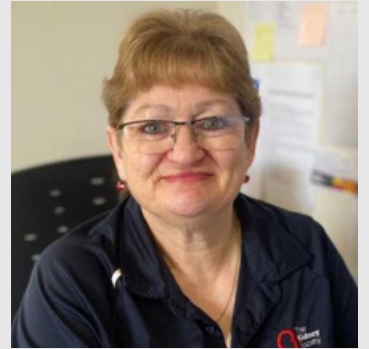
Joanne: Development Manager

Joanne leads our fundraising initiatives and partnerships, helping us grow our reach and impact across Aotearoa. She manages our donor care, Legacy Programme (gift in your will), and fundraising initiatives.



Kath: Chief Executive Officer

Kath Eastwood leads the Kidney Society team in supporting clients through education, home support, community dialysis homes, wellness programmes, and more.



Maria: Office Assistant

Maria supports the team by helping clients by preparing new client packs, coordinating resources for community events, assisting with the quarterly newsletter, and more.

Whether you're living with kidney disease, supporting a loved one, or just want to learn more – the Kidney Society is your community of care! Get in touch when you need.

Call us

Phone: 09 278 1321
Freephone: 0800 235 711

Email us

contact@kidneysociety.org.nz

Head to our website

www.kidneysociety.org.nz

Connect us on socials

[@kidneysocietyadks](https://www.instagram.com/kidneysocietyadks)

Visit us

5 Swaffield Road, Papatoetoe,
Auckland

PO Box 97026, Manukau City,
Auckland 2241

Office hours

Monday to Friday
9am – 5pm

Kia ora from Kath



Kia ora and welcome to the winter edition of our magazine!

As the temperatures drop, we hope you're staying warm, well, and surrounded by support. Winter can bring its own set of challenges, but it's also a time to reflect, reconnect, and recharge and we're here with you every step of the way.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who helped make Kidney Health Month in March a success. Whether you shared your story, raised awareness, or donated, your actions helped shine a light on the importance of kidney health. This momentum is something we want to keep building. If you or someone close to you has experienced kidney disease, your journey could inspire others. Post your story on social media and tag us or simply share our posts to spread the word. A small action can make a big difference.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our recent survey. It was both insightful and encouraging to hear directly from you about your experiences and needs. Your feedback also highlighted opportunities to grow and improve and will directly inform how we shape our services and support going forward. Thank you again for sharing your voices with us.

We're excited to welcome Kirsty Joyce, who has joined us as our new social worker. We know how crucial it is to have someone in your corner throughout the renal journey, and we know Kirsty will bring warmth and expertise to the role.

While there may be a few changes happening behind the scenes, one thing remains constant - our unwavering commitment to you. Over the coming months, you'll find more tips, tools, and insights in our magazine, on social media, and at our community education events, covering everything from blood pressure and nutrition to dialysis, fluid balance, and body weight. We're here to help you live your best life.

We've packed this edition with helpful information and updates from across the community. Whatever the season brings your way, we're here for you.

Stay warm, stay well, and we'll see you soon.

**Ngā manaakitanga,
Kath**

Kidney Society

Events



15

Friday
15th May 2026

Rotorua Advanced Kidney Care Session

10am to 2pm
St Davids Presbyterian Church
Cnr Wharenui & Reeve Road
Owhata, Rotorua

For more information about the event or if you'd like to attend, please contact Jack at Jack@kidneysociety.org.nz.

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Wednesday
27th May 2026

Live Kidney Donation Education Session

Wiri Community Hall, 11 Inverell
Avenue Wiri

For more information about the event or if you'd like to attend, please contact Vanessa at vanessa@kidneysociety.org.nz

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Friday
19th June 2026

Hamilton Advanced Kidney Care Session

10am to 2pm
Fellowship Lounge, St Andrews
Presbyterian Church
4 Te Aroha Street, Hamilton

For more information about the event or if you'd like to attend, please contact Jack at Jack@kidneysociety.org.nz.

23

Tuesday
23rd June 2026

Counties Pre Dialysis day session

Friends Building, Auckland Botanical
Gardens
102 Hill Road Manurewa, Auckland

For more information about the event or if you'd like to attend, please contact Nogi Taviliniu-Eiao, mobile 021890762, email Nogi.Eiao@middlemore.co.nz

MaxCare Medical Event

Our CEO Kath recently had the opportunity to present at a community health event organised by the team at MaxCare Medical Centre, and it turned out to be a really special morning.

Events like this are exactly what community-based healthcare is all about - bringing people together, raising awareness, and making sure that the right information reaches the people who need it most. Kath had the opportunity to share the mahi the Kidney Society does every day, connect with members of the community, and hear firsthand about the health challenges facing people in the area.

The room was full of people who genuinely cared about their health, their whānau, and their community.

But the generosity didn't stop there. The MaxCare Medical Centre team presented the Kidney Society with a remarkable \$2,000 donation that will go directly towards supporting people living with kidney disease across Aotearoa.

We are so grateful to be part of events like this. Raising awareness in our communities, building connections, and meeting the people we exist to serve — this is exactly why we do what we do.

The Kidney Society looks forward to continuing this wonderful collaboration with MaxCare Medical Centre, with more community events already in the pipeline.

To the entire MaxCare team — thank you.

Your generosity and commitment to your community is truly inspiring.



Running for a cause close to her heart

On a Saturday morning not long ago, a group of incredible people laced up their shoes and gave up their weekend — not for themselves, but for the kidney community.

The event was organised by **Charlotte Abbott**, whose connection to kidney disease is deeply personal. For six years, Charlotte watched her grandad Graeme live with chronic kidney disease, while her granny Jenny stood steadfastly by his side through every challenge.

"It showed me how deeply kidney disease affects the whole whānau," Charlotte says. "Not just the person living with it, but everyone who loves them."



That experience has since inspired Charlotte to channel her energy into making a real difference for others facing similar journeys. And this year, she has set herself an extraordinary challenge — running 2026km in 2026.

The fundraising run was a significant milestone in that mission, bringing together a community of supporters united by a shared belief that kidney disease deserves more awareness, more funding, and more love.

The Kidney Society is incredibly grateful to Charlotte and every single person who showed up on the day. Your support makes a real and lasting difference to our kidney community — and to everything we can achieve together.

Walking together for kidney health

On a sunny Saturday morning in March, a wonderful group of people gathered at the corner of Coronation and Waterfront Roads in Māngere Bridge — lacing up their shoes and setting off together on a 5.5km loop with a purpose close to all of their hearts.

The community walk, held during Kidney Health Month, was organised by the incredible Avaluia Tavui of the Manukau Sunrise Rotary Club. The goal was simple but meaningful: to raise awareness of kidney disease and raise funds to replace dialysis chairs in the Kidney Society's Community Dialysis Houses.

Those chairs matter more than you might think. For clients who spend hours dialysing

several times a week, comfort and quality of care can make an enormous difference to their experience and wellbeing. The funds raised through this walk will go directly towards making that a reality.

Participants had the freedom to walk the full 5.5km loop, half the distance, or simply whatever suited them — making it a relaxed, social and genuinely inclusive event. And that spirit of warmth and community was felt throughout the morning.

The Kidney Society extends a heartfelt thank you to Avaluia and the Manukau Sunrise Rotary Club for organising such a wonderful event, and to every single person who showed up and walked with us.

If you'd like to **support Charlotte's mission** and help her reach her goal of 2026km, you can

donate:

givealittle.co.nz/fundraise/r/2026km-in-2026

or scan the code below.



You are absolutely amazing !!



RENAL PEER SUPPORT GROUP

Rōpū Tautoko Aropā Renal

Kidney Kōrero - Talking about living with Chronic Kidney Disease



Who is it for?

People living in the **Counties Manukau Region** living with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD).

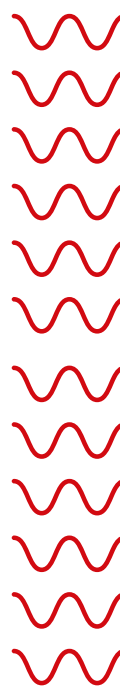
This kaupapa kōrero is a new initiative offering the opportunity to hear real-life stories from people living with CKD. The purpose is to promote a supportive group environment, to share lived experiences, to have purposeful discussions, and to share different coping skills and ways that have helped others on their kidney journey.

What is it?

A safe space where people share their lived experiences and stories on living with Kidney Disease.

If you have any questions or would like to
RSVP: **Contact Brenda: +021 801 259**

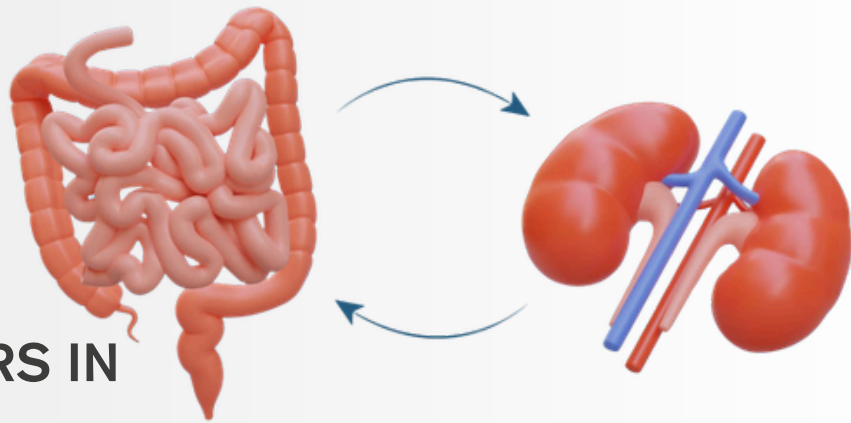
Come along and bring your whānau for a kōrero.



KEEPING THINGS MOVING:

WHY YOUR GUT MATTERS IN KIDNEY HEALTH

By Te Toka Tumai Auckland City Hospital Renal Dietitians



Constipation, bloating, diarrhoea, or irregular bowels are common for people living with kidney disease. Your bowels play an important role in how you feel each day and can affect your comfort, appetite, mood, and wellbeing.

When the kidneys are not working well, the bowel helps remove some waste products from the body. For people on peritoneal dialysis, constipation can sometimes affect how well dialysis fluid drains. Looking after your bowels is an important part of looking after your kidney health. The good news is there are simple things you can try to help keep your bowels moving regularly.

Why do bowels change in kidney disease?

Some people need to limit how much fluid they drink each day, especially if they are on dialysis. Drinking less fluid can make bowel motions harder to pass.

Changes to appetite or the foods we eat can also play a role. If we eat less fibre than our gut needs, it can be harder to stay regular. Fibre is found in plant foods like grains, fruit, vegetables, and legumes (beans), and helps keep things moving more comfortably.

Being less physically active can slow the bowels, especially during winter when we spend more time indoors.

Some medications may slow things down and increase constipation, while others may cause diarrhoea. If you notice changes after starting a new medicine, speak with your healthcare team.

How do I know if I am constipated?

Constipation is common with kidney disease. You may be constipated if you notice:



Bowel motions that are hard or difficult to pass



Needing to strain when going to the toilet



Opening your bowels less than three times per week



Feeling like your bowels have not fully emptied

Eleanor Fitzgerald

Renal Dietitian

23-456-7890

hello@reallygreatsite.com

STAYING REGULAR IN THE WINTER

Winter can be a time when our bowels slow down. We spend more time indoors, move less, and may drink less fluids than usual with the colder weather. Small daily habits can make a difference. Try choosing one small change:



Drinking Fluids



Drinking fluids regularly across the day (rather than all at once) within your recommended allowance, and including more warm drinks, especially in the morning

Short Walk



Going for a short walk each day. If it's cold outside, try a few laps at your local shopping mall. It's warm and great for people-watching

Going to the Toilet



Allowing enough time to go to the toilet when your body signals the need.

Morning Routine



Building a regular morning routine, such as warm porridge or breakfast before starting the day

Fibre



Including fibre in your meals (your bowel's best helper)

- Fibre from plant foods helps keep bowel motions soft and easier to pass.

WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP

Constipation and diarrhoea are common with kidney disease, but it's important to seek advice if bowel changes continue or become uncomfortable. Speak with your renal team or healthcare provider if you notice:

- **constipation that continues despite using laxatives, or needing more laxatives than usual**
- **diarrhoea lasting more than a couple of days**
- **blood in your bowel motions**
- **ongoing or severe stomach pain**
- **feeling dizzy, lightheaded, or dehydrated**



A simple goal is to include a small amount of plant food at meals. Using the Healthy Plate Model can help, aim for 1/2 your plate to be vegetables, 1/4 protein foods, and 1/4 grains or starchy foods.

Warm Apple & Cinnamon Baked Oats

This can be stored in the fridge or freezer for quick breakfasts during the week. Reheat in the microwave with a splash of milk. Serves 6–8.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups rolled oats
- 1½ cups milk
- ½ cup water
- 2 apples, grated or finely chopped
- 1 egg
- 1 TBSP vegetable oil
- 1–2 TBSP brown sugar or maple syrup (optional)
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp vanilla essence

Optional extras:

- 1 cup frozen berries

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
2. Mix oats, cinnamon and baking powder in one bowl. In another bowl, whisk milk, water, egg, oil, and vanilla.
3. Stir wet ingredients into dry ingredients. Then add the apple (and frozen berries if using).
4. Pour into greased baking dish and bake for 30–35 minutes.
5. Cut into portions and serve warm with yoghurt, or with stewed fruit.

Fibre-Friendly Chop Suey

This recipe uses frozen vegetables and legumes to make a budget-friendly, fibre-rich meal. Serves 4.

Ingredients:

- 1 TBSP vegetable oil
- 1 onion, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 3-4 cups frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 can of chickpeas or lentils, rinsed
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp grated ginger
- 1 packet vermicelli or thin noodles
- 2 cups water

Optional extras:

- 1 cup cooked chicken pieces
- sliced spring onion
- frozen spinach
- squeeze of lemon or lime

Instructions:

1. Heat oil in a large pan over medium heat.
2. Cook onion and garlic until softened.
3. Add frozen vegetables and cook for 4–5 minutes until heated through.
4. Add chickpeas or lentils (and chicken if using).
5. Add soy sauce, ginger, and water.
6. Add noodles and simmer until softened.

SGLT2 inhibitors

A medicine that can help protect your kidneys

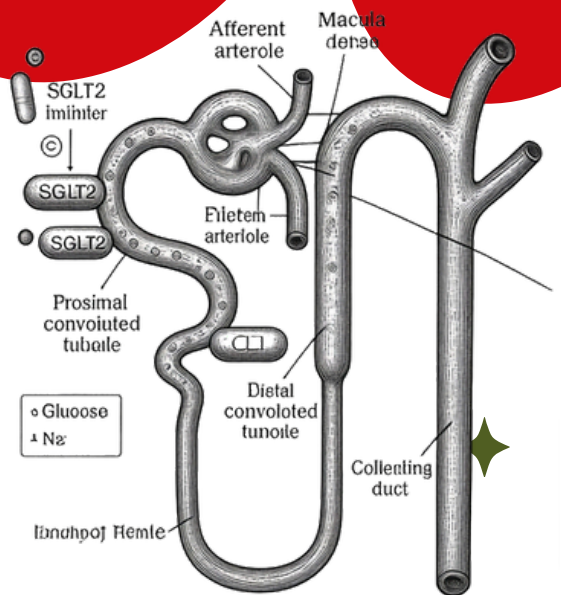
A large study looking at more than 70,000 people has found that a group of medicines called SGLT2 inhibitors can help slow down kidney disease. In New Zealand, the funded medicine in this group is Empagliflozin.

The study showed that these medicines help protect the kidneys in many different people with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). This includes people whose kidney function is already quite low, as well as people who have only small amounts, or even no, protein leaking into their urine.

Researchers also found that SGLT2 inhibitors helped slow the drop in kidney function (often measured by the estimated Glomerular Filtration Rate (eGFR)). This means the kidneys keep working better for longer. The medicines also reduced the chance of kidney failure.

Importantly, these benefits were seen in people with and without diabetes.

This research suggests that medicines like empagliflozin should be a key part of treatment for many people living with CKD. They can help slow kidney damage and lower the risk of kidney failure, even in people with more advanced kidney disease.



***Let's talk,
share, and grow
together.***

Take-home message:

SGLT2 inhibitor medicines such as empagliflozin can reduce the risk of kidney disease getting worse, including in people with very little protein in their urine and in people with more advanced CKD. Next time you're visiting your GP, ask if empagliflozin might be suitable for you.

This article was informed by research published in *JAMA* (2026) by Neuen BL et al., for the SGLT2 Inhibitor Meta-Analysis Cardio-Renal Trialists' Consortium (SMART-C) in an article named: SGLT2 inhibitors and kidney outcomes by glomerular filtration rate and albuminuria.



STAYING SAFE ONLINE!

Recently, a member of our client services team was visiting a client at home when they received a phone call. The caller claimed to be helping resolve a technical issue and spoke in a calm, professional manner, guiding the client through a series of steps on their device.

At first, the instructions seemed reasonable. However, as the call continued, the requests became more concerning. The caller began directing the client to access personal applications, including their online banking, and to make changes to security settings.

This is a major red flag.

Recognising the risk, our team member stepped in and ended the call. It became clear that the caller was not legitimate, but someone attempting to gain access to sensitive personal and financial information.



Recognising Scams and Protecting Yourself

Technology makes everyday life easier, whether it's staying in touch with whānau, booking appointments, or managing your banking. But it also means we need to be more aware of scams, which are becoming more common and increasingly convincing.

Scammers are no longer easy to spot. They often sound professional, patient, and helpful, which can make it hard to tell when something isn't right.

Quick Red Flags

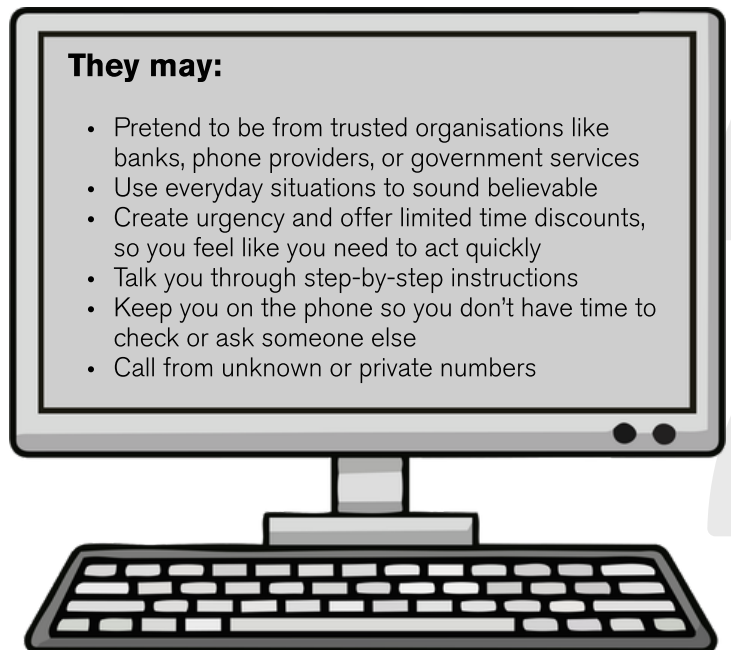
- Unexpected calls or messages
- Being asked to change phone or device settings
- Requests for passwords, PINs, or security codes
- Being told to open your banking app during a call
- Pressure to act quickly or urgently
- Vague or unclear information about who they are

Why These Scams Work

Scammers are good at what they do. They know how to build trust quickly and keep people engaged.

They may:

- Pretend to be from trusted organisations like banks, phone providers, or government services
- Use everyday situations to sound believable
- Create urgency and offer limited time discounts, so you feel like you need to act quickly
- Talk you through step-by-step instructions
- Keep you on the phone so you don't have time to check or ask someone else
- Call from unknown or private numbers



These situations can feel very real in the moment, especially if you're busy, tired, or just trying to sort something out quickly.

Why This Matters For Our Community

For many people living with kidney disease, there is already a lot to manage - appointments, medications, fatigue, and daily life. Scammers take advantage of distraction and vulnerability - not because someone has done anything wrong, but because they're human.

Anyone can be caught out. These scams are designed to work.



Top Tips To Stay Safe

- Pause – Take a moment before doing anything
- Trust your gut – If it feels off, it probably is
- Hang up – It's always okay to end the call
- Call back – Use an official number you trust
- Keep details private – Never share passwords or PINs
- Check with someone – A second opinion can help

What To Do If You Think You've Been Scammed

1. Act quickly—the sooner you respond, the better.
2. Contact your bank immediately. They may be able to stop or recover payments.
3. Stop all contact. Hang up, don't reply, and block the number if you can.
4. Secure your accounts. Change passwords for banking, email, and other important accounts.
5. Talk to someone you trust. You don't have to deal with it on your own.
6. Don't feel embarrassed. Scams are designed to catch people off guard - it can happen to anyone. **OR**

Report It.

- **Netsafe** – www.netsafe.org.nz
- **CERT NZ** – www.cert.govt.nz
- **Consumer Protection** – www.consumerprotection.govt.nz

Looking Out For Each Other

Sometimes the best protection is simply being aware. Having conversations with whānau, friends, and others in your community about scams can help everyone feel more confident and prepared. A quick check-in, or even just listening, can make a real difference.

Final Thought

Scammers rely on people being unsure, rushed, or trusting. If something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.

KIDNEY HEALTH MONTH 2026

A MONTH OF FACTS, PLANS AND ACTION

fact
plan
action

Every March, the Kidney Society uses Kidney Health Month to shine a light on one of Aotearoa's most undertalked health challenges. This year, we did things a little differently.

Instead of simply raising awareness, we launched a campaign with a clear three-part message: Fact. Plan. Action. Because we know that awareness alone isn't enough. Real change happens when people have the knowledge, the tools, and the confidence to act.

The actions we encouraged

We also took the opportunity to spotlight some of the unique support the Kidney Society offers that many people don't know about.

- **Free calls with our Health and Wellness Educators:** Whether you've just been diagnosed or have been living with kidney disease for a while, it can be hard to know where to start. We offer free 15-minute calls with both our Health Educator and our Wellness Educator — a friendly, no-pressure conversation where you can ask questions and get guidance tailored to your situation. Have questions about your kidney health?
- **Kidney Connect — peer support from people who get it:** Our Kidney Connect programme pairs people affected by kidney disease with volunteers who have genuine lived experience. Whether you're newly diagnosed, preparing for dialysis, or supporting a loved one, a Kidney Connection offers a listening ear, real insights, and support from someone who has truly walked the same road.
- **Community Dialysis Houses — a home away from home:** Not everyone has the space or support to dialyse at home — and hospital dialysis can feel restrictive. Our community dialysis houses offer a 24/7 alternative where trained patients can dialyse independently, with dignity and support, in a setting that feels genuinely human rather than clinical.

Kidney Health Month is only possible because of the people who show up, who share our posts, book those calls, reach out for support, and choose to have conversations about kidney health with their whānau.

The conversation doesn't end in March. The Kidney Society is here every single day of the year.

If this month has sparked something for you, whether that's curiosity about your own kidney health, a desire to support someone you love, or simply a new awareness of how important those kidneys really are:

We'd love to hear from you!

The facts we shared

We started the month with a statistic that surprises many: **1 in 10 New Zealanders are affected by kidney disease**, and many in the early stages don't even know it. Kidney disease can be silent, which is exactly why it so often goes undetected until it's already advanced.

Throughout the month we shared the real numbers, the real stories, and the real impact of kidney disease on individuals, whānau and our communities. We talked about high blood pressure, diabetes, the isolation that can come with a chronic diagnosis, and the growing demand for dialysis across Aotearoa.

The plans we offered

Knowledge without a next step doesn't change lives. That's why every fact we shared came with a plan — a simple, practical action anyone could take.

Whether that was calling us, booking a kōrero with one of our Health Educators, understanding blood test results, or simply knowing that support exists — we wanted every person who saw our content to leave with something they could do.



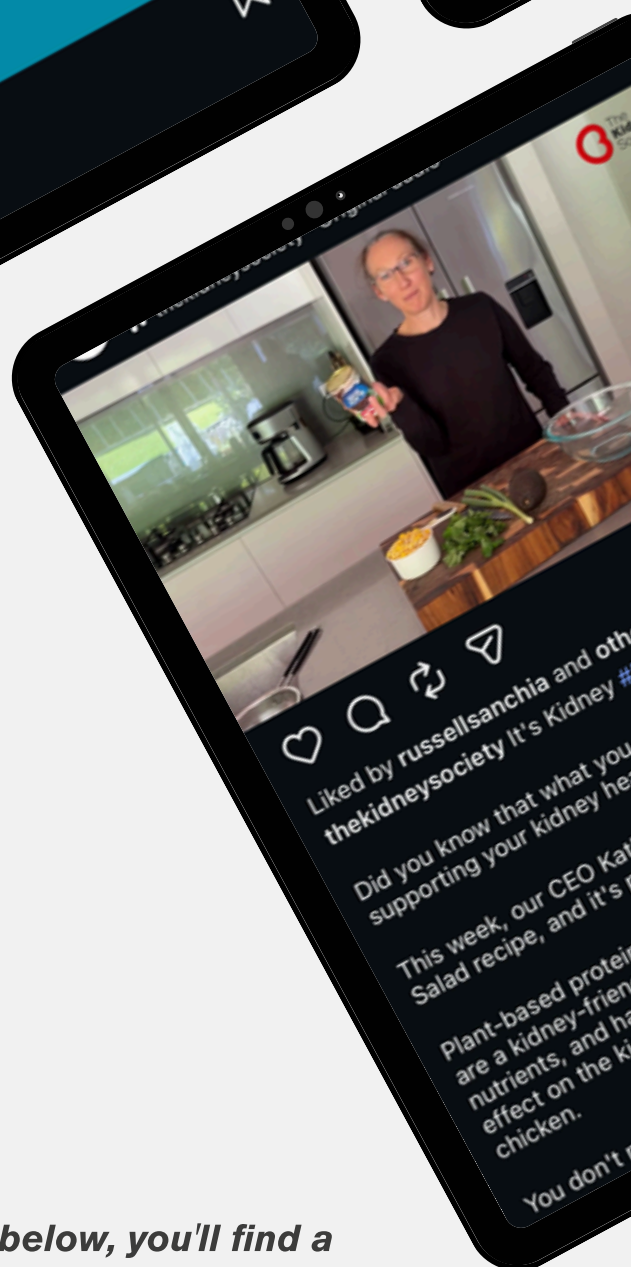
Foodie Friday!

If you follow us on Facebook or Instagram, you may have already come across our Foodie Friday series — a regular feature where we share practical nutrition tips, dietary advice, and kidney-friendly recipes to help make eating well with kidney disease a little easier and a lot more enjoyable.

Head to our social media pages to catch up on everything we've shared so far:

 facebook.com/kidneysocietyadks
 instagram.com/thekidneysociety

And below, you'll find a selection of recipes we've put together just for you:



Dahl

Servings: 6 people

Ingredients:

- 1 Tablespoon canola oil
- 1 large onion
- 4 cloves garlic
- ½ teaspoon ginger powder
- ½ teaspoon chilli flakes
- 2 teaspoons garam masala
- 2 teaspoons turmeric
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 can tomatoes (no added salt)
- 1 can lite coconut cream
- 3 cups water
- 2 cups dried yellow split peas
- 1 bunch spinach (or 4 large leaves silverbeet)



Method:

1. Chop onion and garlic
2. Put oil and onion in a frypan or pot and cook for 5 minutes until soft.
3. Add all of the spices and seasonings. Allow them to cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly.
4. Add the tomatoes, coconut cream and water. Mix well.
5. Pour in the yellow split peas and stir
6. Cover then simmer for 80 minutes.
7. Stir every now so it doesn't stick to the bottom of the pan or pot.
8. 5-minutes before the end of cooking, add the spinach, stir & continue cooking.
9. Serve with steamed brown basmati rice, yoghurt and coriander.
10. Note: for a faster cook time put yellow split peas in a bowl and cover with water and leave for 2 hours - overnight

Frittata

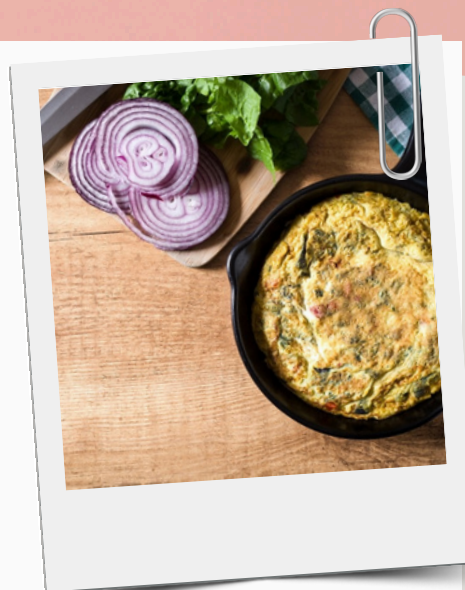
Servings: 6 people

Ingredients:

- 6 eggs
- 1 cup grated cheese
- 1/2 cup of milk
- 1/4 tsp of garlic powder
- 1 onion diced
- 1 carrot diced
- 1/2 leek diced
- 1 cup of any leftover roast vegetables or frozen vege
- 1 cup of leftover roast meat or tinned beans like lentils or chickpeas (optional)

Method:

1. Pre-heat oven to 180°C
2. Fry the diced onion, carrot and leek until soft
3. Place the cooked onion, leek and carrot, the frozen or roast vegetables, and the leftover meat or tinned beans (if using) in a medium-sized roasting dish
4. Mix the eggs, cheese, milk and garlic powder, then pour over the ingredients in the roasting tray
5. Put in the oven 20 minutes or until the egg has set in the center
6. Slice up and enjoy with cracked black pepper on top



Foot Neuropathy and Kidney Disease: Exercises to Keep Your Feet Healthy

During visits in the community, a common kōrero that comes up is around **numb or tingling feet**. Many people and whānau share that their feet feel different—whether it's pins and needles, burning, or a loss of sensation. These changes can be linked to the effects of kidney disease on the nerves, circulation, and overall health of the body.

To help manage these symptoms, a combination of gentle movement and massage can support circulation, ease discomfort, and help people feel more confident staying active at home.



Why numbness and tingling happen?

For people living with kidney disease, there are several reasons why foot neuropathy can develop:

Nerve damage (neuropathy):

Toxins that build up in the body when kidneys aren't working well can affect nerve function.

Reduced circulation:

Changes in blood flow can limit oxygen and nutrients reaching the feet.

Fluid changes and swelling:

Swelling in the lower legs and feet can put pressure on nerves.

Diabetes:

A common cause of kidney disease, which can also damage nerves in the feet.

Muscle weakness and reduced movement:

Less activity can reduce circulation and contribute to stiffness and discomfort.

Foot neuropathy can feel like tingling, numbness, burning, or **“pins and needles,”** and may affect balance and confidence when walking, please advise your renal team if this is you.

Why exercises help

Regular movement improves blood flow to the feet and lower legs, helps maintain muscle strength, supports balance, and reduces the risk of injury. For people with neuropathy, consistent, gentle activity is safer and more effective than occasional intense exercise.

SIMPLE EXERCISES FOR FOOT NEUROPATHY

01.

Foot rolls

- Sit comfortably on a chair.
- Place a foot roller, tennis ball, or small ball under your foot.
- Roll your foot slowly back and forth for 1–2 minutes per foot.
- Helps improve circulation and relieve discomfort.

02.

Ankle circles

- Sit on a chair with your feet lifted slightly off the floor.
- Rotate each ankle slowly: 10 circles each direction.
- Keeps joints mobile and supports circulation.

03.

Toe curls and spreads

- Curl your toes downward, then spread them apart.
- Repeat 10–15 times per foot.
- Strengthens small foot muscles and supports balance.

06.

Seated marches

- While seated, lift one knee at a time.
- Repeat 10–20 times per leg.
- Helps build strength in the hips and thighs.

05.

Short walks

- Start with short walks to your letterbox or around your home.
- Gradually increase distance over time as your stamina improves.
- Supports circulation, strength, and balance.

04.

Heel raises

- Sit or stand holding a chair for support.
- Lift your heels off the ground, then lower slowly.
- Repeat 10–15 times.
- Strengthens calves and improves circulation.



Tips for safe exercise

- Move slowly and avoid sudden movements.
- Use a chair or stable surface for support if needed.
- Stop if you feel pain or dizziness.
- Keep exercises short and consistent rather than long and tiring.

Daily foot care alongside exercise

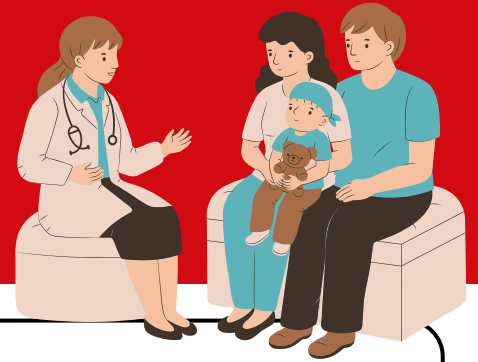
- Check your feet daily for cuts, redness, or swelling.
- Keep feet clean and moisturised (avoid between toes).
- Wear supportive, well-fitting shoes and socks.

Even a few minutes of these exercises each day can help improve circulation, reduce discomfort, and support your confidence when moving. Small, consistent steps can make a meaningful difference in managing foot neuropathy and maintaining independence.

Please reach out if you would like a home visit to discuss anything above or any other exercise or fitness questions.

Your Family doctor Is Still Part of Your Care Team

Kia ora, Talofa lava, Malo lelei, Ni sa bula Vinaka, Namaste,



Living with kidney disease - especially when you're on dialysis - can take up a lot of time and energy. There are regular treatments, appointments, and many things to manage week to week.

In my role as a Community Health Educator with The Kidney Society, and also working in Family doctor clinics (also known as GP or general practice) as a nurse, I get to see different parts of the health system. Through this work, I've noticed that once dialysis becomes part of everyday life, many people naturally start to centre all their health care around it.

The dialysis unit becomes familiar. The staff know you well. It can feel easier to keep everything in one place.

Living with kidney disease - Over time, this can mean that seeing your family doctor quietly falls away - not because it isn't important, but because life is busy, appointments are tiring, and it can feel like dialysis has things covered.

That's very understandable. But even when dialysis is going well, your family doctor and general practice team still play an important role in your care.

How family doctor care fits alongside dialysis

From what I see in general practice, dialysis and family doctor care do different things - and both are important. Dialysis focuses on your kidney treatment. Family doctors focus on your overall health, and how that health changes over time.

Family doctor care supports things like keeping cancer screening and vaccinations up to date, picking up changes early, and making space for conversations that don't always fit into dialysis visits. It's often where people talk about how they're feeling day to day, not just about treatment. Family doctor care isn't about replacing dialysis or adding pressure. It's about supporting the rest of your health alongside it.

Different teams, working together

Dialysis teams are experts in kidney care.

Family doctor teams are experts in day to day and long term health care. One doesn't replace the other.

From working across both The Kidney Society and in Family doctor clinics, I've seen how much easier things can feel when care is connected - when a family doctor knows someone is on dialysis, dialysis teams know who the family doctor is, and information can be shared when needed. This kind of connection helps care feel safer and more joined up for people and their whānau.

Care that's closer to home

Family doctor clinics are usually close to where people live, and many look after whole families. Over time, Family doctor teams get to know who supports you, what matters to you, and what makes health care easier or harder.

It can really help to bring a family member to appointments, take your time, and ask for things to be explained again. Care that feels familiar and respectful often makes it easier to come back when you need to.

About cost

Cost is a real barrier for many people, and that's completely understood.

What's not always known is that there may be support or different options available, depending on the family doctor. From my experience, a good first step is talking with the family doctor or nurse, who can help explain what support might be available and what the expectations are.

You don't have to work it out on your own.

Your health is more than your kidneys

Kidney disease is only one part of a person's life.

People on dialysis are often also managing other health concerns, such as diabetes, heart issues, pain, tiredness, sleep problems, stress, or low mood. Many are also supporting family, working, or dealing with financial pressure.

These things matter- and they don't always get talked about during dialysis.

In family doctors, care is focused on the whole person, not just one condition. This includes things like cancer screening, immunisations, mental wellbeing, reviewing long-term medications, and helping with medical certificates for WINZ (MSD) or referrals to community and social support. Staying connected with a family doctor helps ensure these parts of health don't get missed.

When people haven't been back to the Family doctors for a while

At family doctor clinics, it's not unusual to see people who haven't been back for an appointment in a long time. Most often, this isn't about not caring - it's just how life unfolds when someone is dealing with long-term dialysis.

When this happens, small but important things can sometimes sit in the background. Screening may be overdue, vaccinations missed, or concerns like poor sleep, pain, or low mood not spoken about.

These things might not feel urgent, but they affect every day wellbeing.

The role of whānau and family

How our whānau helps us stay well

We all know that health care can feel like a lot to handle on your own. Having your whānau and family by your side makes a world of difference. Whether they come along to help ask the right questions or just to be there for support, it makes everything feel much less overwhelming. Often, it's that little bit of encouragement from a loved one that helps someone take the first step back to their family doctor.

Looking after yourself for the long term

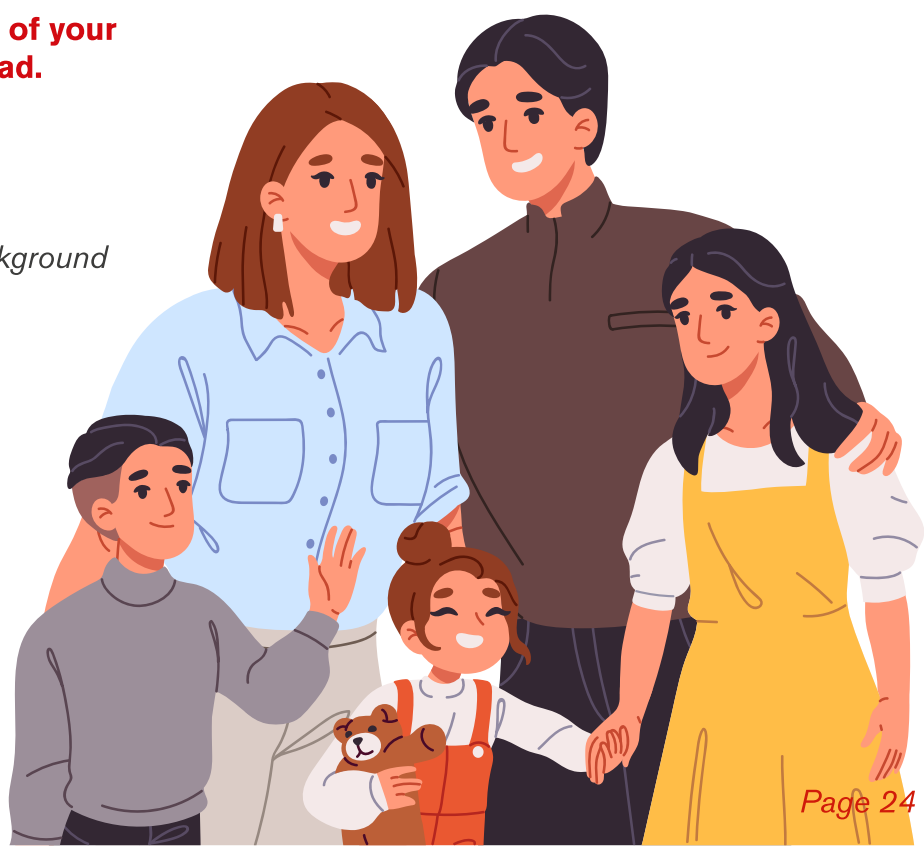
Dialysis is a big part of your life, but it doesn't have to be the only place where you get looked after. In my work with both the Kidney Society and at the family doctor clinic, I've seen how much better things go when your whole care team is connected and welcoming.

I've seen this in my own life, too. Lately, I've made it a priority to take my Samoan dad to see his family doctor. We go together to make sure even the "little things" are being taken care of. I truly believe that by supporting him this way, it doesn't just help my dad, it helps our whole whānau feel stronger and more at ease.

Your family doctor is still a key part of your team - now and for the journey ahead.

Kia kaha. Ia manuia. Take care.

*By Jack Stowers-Vase
Community Health Educator with a background
in general practice nursing*



Looking After Your Lifeline: A Simple Guide to Fistula Care for Dialysis



Are you preparing for dialysis, currently on treatment, or supporting someone who is?



Join us for a **FREE**, practical online session designed to help you understand and care for your fistula with confidence!



What you'll learn

- Early warning signs to watch for — and when to get help
- Simple, everyday tips to keep your fistula healthy
- What an AV fistula is and why it matters
- How to feel more confident managing your care
- How to ask the right questions and work with your healthcare team

Led by a **Clinical Nurse Specialist & someone with lived experience who truly understands - no jargon, just clear advice with practical tips.**

**Thursday 28th
May**

**7:00PM to
8:00PM**

Online

Join from your home, marae, or wherever suits you!



**REGISTER
NOW**



Listening to You

Highlights from Our 2026 Survey

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our recent survey. It was both insightful and encouraging to hear directly from you about your experiences and needs.

We were pleased to see strong engagement with many of our existing services. The majority of respondents (79%) reported receiving the Kidney Society magazine, making it our most widely accessed resource. Support from our Health Educators (44.5%) and Wellness Educators (42%) was also well utilised, highlighting the importance of education and ongoing guidance in managing kidney health.

Other services accessed included dialysis at our community facilities (26.9%), support from Social Workers (21%), and total mobility assessments (21%). Around one in five respondents had attended a Kidney Society event, while smaller numbers had participated in virtual sessions or connected through programmes such as Kidney Connect. Our freephone information line was used by 15.1% of respondents.

While it's encouraging to see these services being used, your feedback also highlighted opportunities to grow and improve.

Many of you expressed a desire for stronger connection and peer support, including mentoring programmes or younger patients and more opportunities to meet others locally for walks, talks, or informal gatherings.

There was also a clear call for counselling services, for both patients and their families, and for having someone to talk to during difficult times.

Practical support remains a priority. Suggestions included food assistance, better access to information about financial support, and guidance on navigating social services. Many respondents shared that they are unsure what they are entitled to or how to access available help.

We also heard the importance of culturally appropriate support, including tikanga Māori-based services and support from ethnic communities. In addition, many of you would like clearer, more accessible information about treatments, such as how dialysis machines work as well as the possibility of a dedicated place to bring information and resources together.

A consistent message throughout the survey was that while there is a strong desire to learn more, it can be difficult to find the right information in one place.

Your feedback is invaluable and will directly inform how we shape our services and support going forward. Thank you again for sharing your voices with us.

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is Kidney disease reversible?

x

You have two kidneys that are incredible organs that work quietly in the background to keep you healthy. Their main job is to filter and clean your blood. Your kidneys are full of tiny blood vessels, and this is where all the filtering and cleaning happens. So, think of them a bit like a coffee filter, they are delicate and designed to filter the good stuff from the waste.

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is when the tiny blood vessels in your kidneys become damaged, and they can no longer continue to fully filter all the good stuff from the waste. This damage happens over time and is generally not reversible.

However, while your kidney damage cannot be reversed once it has occurred, further damage and loss of kidney function can be prevented or significantly slowed through lifestyle modification and medications. This is one of the reasons why it is so important to detect kidney disease early.

Acute kidney injury (sudden damage) can sometimes be reversed, but chronic damage is permanent.

What is Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)?

+

What are the early signs of kidney disease?

+

Can kidney damage be reversed?

+

FAQ

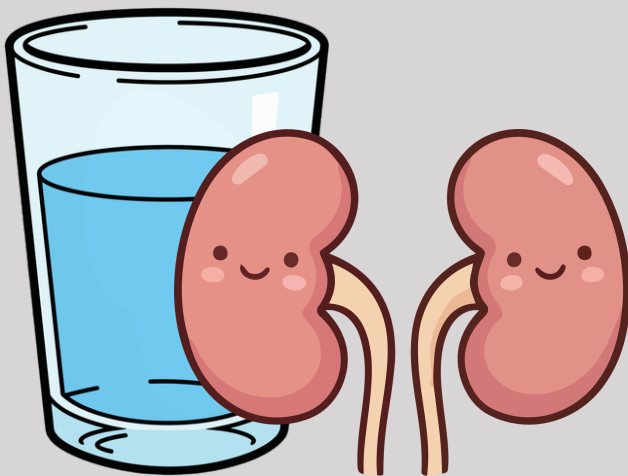
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why am I on a fluid restriction?

x

When your kidney's become damaged, they are not as good at removing excess fluid from your body (as urine). This means that these fluids build up in the body. This can cause high blood pressure, swelling, and breathing difficulties. This is why your doctor might have recommended a certain amount of fluid for you each day.

Following the fluid recommendations your doctor has given you is important to prevent you from becoming overloaded with fluid which can affect your heart.



What is Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)?

+

What are the early signs of kidney disease?

+

Can kidney damage be reversed?

+

If you have any questions about your kidneys or chronic kidney disease, give us a call on 0800 235 711 or book a call with one of our Health Educators [here](#)

DIFFERENT DINNERS ONE DAY WORKSHOP

Want to know more about plant-based foods? Not sure where to begin? Come along as we learn the benefits of a well-balanced diet using easy and cost-effective plant-based options. Both helpful to our planet and our own health!

TERM 2: APRIL - JUNE 2026 INTAKE NOW OPEN

1 DAY ONLY, IN PERSON : 10AM-2:00PM

PUKEKOHE	EMBER House, 75 Seddon Street, Pukekohe • Monday 20 th April & Monday 8 th June
MANGERE	Mangere Old School Hall, 299 Kirkbride Rd, Mangere • Thursday 21 st May
OTAHUHU	Otahuhu Town Hall, 10 High St, Otahuhu • Wednesday 3 rd June
OTARA	Starcare Centre, 120 East Tamaki Rd, Otara Level 1 • Wednesday 17 th June
RANUI	Ranui Community Centre, 474 Swanson Rd, RANUI • Friday 26 th June

Different Dinners is simple and free to join!

BENEFITS OF COMPLETING THIS WORKSHOP:



- Come along and complete a quick survey
- A recipe booklet filled with mouthwatering plant-based creations
- Handy magnetic meal and shopping planners to make your life easier

LIMITED SPACES!!

Ask your Doctor, Nurse, HIP, Health Coach,
OR contact Rita - SME Team Lead
09 274 7823 ext 9540 | 027 836 5413

rita.tai@tamakihealth.co.nz



LIVELIGHTLY



Diabetes

Foundation Aotearoa
Te Tumu Matihika o Aotearoa



**TOTAL
HEALTHCARE**

Diversity Equity Wellness
www.totalhealthcare.co.nz

Local Doctors

Tāmaki Health

**Auckland
Council**

Te Kaunhera o Tāmaki Makaurau



Manage Better, Feel Stronger

Our health and wellbeing courses are FREE 4 or 6-week long programmes, designed to help you and your family cope better with long-term health conditions.

TERM 2: APR - JUNE 2026 INTAKE NOW OPEN

6-WEEK, IN PERSON PROGRAMMES: 10AM-12:30PM

MANUREWA GENERIC	Nathan Homestead, 70 Hill Road, Manurewa Thursday, 23rd April 2026
OTARA DIABETES	Starcare Centre, 120 East Tamaki Rd, Otara, Level 1 Wednesday 29 th April 2026
OTARA CHRONIC PAIN	Starcare Centre, 120 East Tamaki Rd, Otara, Level 1 Tuesday 5 th May 2026
RANUI DIABETES	Ranui Community Centre, 474 Swanson Rd, Ranui Friday 15 th May 2026

4-WEEK, IN PERSON PROGRAMMES: 10AM-11:30AM

OTAHUHU MBT	Otahuhu Town Hall, 10 High St, Otahuhu Thursdays 30 th April 2026
PUKEKOHE MBT	EMBER House, 75 Seddon Street, Pukekohe Monday 4 th May 2026

ZOOM PROGRAMMES

MBT - Manage Better Together
Tuesdays, 26th May 2026
6pm - 7:30pm
4 consecutive weeks



www.selfmanagementresource.com



 Local Doctors

Tāmaki Health 

Join our 4 or 6-week Manage Better, Feel Stronger Course

The self-management course is for anyone who has a long-term condition (physical and/or mental health), and for caregivers of someone with a long-term condition, such as:

- Diabetes, asthma, arthritis, gout
- Heart disease, high blood pressure
- Depression, anxiety, stress

The course provides a self-management tool kit of support and information for:

- Healthy eating, physical activity, sleep
- Action planning, problem solving, decision making
- Communication, understanding emotions
- Medication, working with providers

People who attend the courses have reported:

- Better understanding of health behaviours
- Improved social life, sleep and reduced levels of pain
- Better understanding of diabetes and chronic pain
- Improved quality of life and confidence to take care of themselves and others

FREE for registered patients.

Courses available Auckland wide and via Zoom.

The 6 weeks Manage Better course was developed at Patient Education Centre at Stanford University, California

INTERESTED?

Ask your doctor, nurse, wellness advisor,
health coach, or get in touch with:

Rita - SME Team Lead

09 274 7823 ext 9540 | 027 836 5413

rita.taie@tamakihealth.co.nz

*"It is way easier to log in,
make a coffee and not have
to leave the house" (Zoom
Course)*

*"I gained confidence to
talk to my doctor and
family about my health"
(In-person course)*

*"It felt like I was on the
course physically" (Zoom
Course).*

*"This course has been
healing for my physical
and emotional self" (In-
person course)*



www.selfmanagementresource.com



Local Doctors

Tāmaki Health

The Kidney Society is a well-respected charity that relies on public donations, bequests, sponsorships, and other forms of financial support from the community in order to be able to meet the needs of those with kidney conditions. We are not government-funded. The Society's services are provided free of charge because we firmly believe that everyone with a kidney condition should have access to good quality support and information.

We offer our sincere thanks to the following Trusts and Foundations who have recently provided grants to help fund our client services.

Aotearoa Gaming Trust - \$15,000
NH Taylor Charitable Trust - \$10,000
Four Winds Foundation - \$15,000
Dragon Community Trust - \$7,000
Mt Wellington Charitable Trust - \$8,000
NZ Lotteries Grant Board - \$35,000

We acknowledge, and are grateful for, the generous support received from all of the organisations listed above.

We're incredibly grateful to NZ Couriers for their ongoing donated services, and to Marley New Zealand for generously supplying materials.

In Memoriam Donations have been received in memory of:

Narath Senanarong

Diane Bond

David Wofenden

Warwick Mullions

We offer our thoughts to family and friends and thank them for their support.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the many people who have donated to the Kidney Society over the last three months. Every donation, no matter how small, makes a real difference. Thank you!

The Kidney Society welcomes public donations, and these are tax deductible. Donations can be made via the Society's website or directly into our secure bank account.

Details below:

Website address is: www.kidneysociety.org.nz

Bank account number: 12-3032-0705009-00

Auckland District Kidney Society

Please include your details so we can send you a receipt for tax purposes. If you would like to talk to us about a donation, sponsorship, or fundraising event, please contact Kath Eastwood on 0800 235 711 or email: kath@kidneysociety.org.nz

A \$20 donation supports a client to receive this magazine for a whole year.

A \$96 donation funds the purchase of 20 Wellness packs for clients.

A \$240 donation funds a series of home visits to clients.