

DaVita Encourages People to Get to Know Their Kidneys During National Kidney Month

Company provides resources for high risk populations - those with diabetes, high blood pressure and minority populations

PR Newswire
DENVER

DENVER, March 2, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- [DaVita Kidney Care](#), a division of DaVita HealthCare Partners Inc. (NYSE: DVA) and a leading provider of kidney care services, is encouraging people to take a 60-second quiz to learn about their risk for chronic kidney disease during March, National Kidney Month.

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To take the quiz and access other kidney disease resources, please visit [DaVita.com/LearnYourRisk](#).

One in 10 adults age 20 or older in the U.S. has kidney disease, but many may not be aware of their risk because kidney disease is usually symptomless or dismissed as a general health issue like stress or fatigue. When caught early enough, the progression of kidney disease can be slowed down and, in some cases, be prevented altogether. When kidney disease progresses to kidney failure, or end stage renal disease, a person must start dialysis or get a transplant to survive.

"Dialysis isn't an easy thing to go through, but end stage renal disease isn't end stage - it's just another stage in your life," said Robert Gandy, executive chef and nocturnal dialysis patient. "If I knew the risks for kidney disease early on there's a good chance I could've stopped the disease in its tracks. People need to learn their risk, get tested for kidney disease and maybe they won't end up on dialysis like me."

People at the greatest risk for kidney disease include those with diabetes and high blood pressure, as well as older adults. Minority populations - particularly Hispanics, African-Americans and American Indians - are also at a disproportionately higher rate of developing kidney disease. Additional risk factors include people with cardiovascular disease, obesity, high cholesterol, lupus and a family history of the disease.

According to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- One in three people with diabetes has kidney disease.
- One in five people with high blood pressure has kidney disease.
- African-Americans are about three and a half times more likely to develop kidney failure than whites.
- Hispanics are one and a half times more likely to develop kidney failure than non-Hispanics.

For those already living with kidney disease, DaVita Kidney Care offers resources to help manage the disease.

Specialized instructors, such as nurses and dietitians, lead no-cost, 90-minute Kidney Smart classes where individuals can learn:

- How to create an action plan that's personalized to your lifestyle and will help you manage your kidney health
- What causes kidney disease and how to delay its progression
- What diet resources are available to help you manage your diet and cook a variety of flavorful, kidney-friendly meals

- Why continuing to work may keep you happier and healthier
- How insurance counselors can help you navigate coverage or financial questions

To find a class near you, please visit KidneySmart.org.

Other resources DaVita Kidney Care offers include:

1. myDaVita - an online community designed to help you manage your health, find support from others, and engage family and friends in an interactive forum. Sign up at DaVita.com/JoinMyDaVita to share stories, gain insights and make connections with others.
2. DaVita Diet Helper - Taking charge of your health through diet management is a critical way to slow down the progression of kidney disease. In addition to 1,000-plus kidney-friendly recipes, DaVita Diet Helper™ offers a way to track potassium, phosphorus and sodium levels. Learn more at DaVita.com/MyDietHelper.
3. Find a Nephrologist - It is important to find the right nephrologist to help you manage your kidney disease. Go to DaVita.com/FAD to locate a nearby nephrologist.
4. Stay Employed - Working while on dialysis can have both physical and emotional benefits, including lower rates of depression, fewer hospitalizations, and higher scores on general health and vitality tests. Find out more about the benefits of working and how to have conversations about kidney disease with your employer at DaVita.com/WorkingBenefits.

This is the first time National Kidney Month has been celebrated since the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released its Five-Star ranking system, which ranks dialysis centers across the country based on key performance measures. DaVita Kidney Care performed the best in the industry in this initial ranking, having 50 percent of its center with a four- or five-star rating. Additionally, based on results from CMS' [Quality Incentive Program](#) (QIP), DaVita Kidney Care outperformed the industry in every category with 98.5 percent of its centers being among the top clinical performance tiers in the country.

This recognition of CMS' Five-Star and QIP results shows that DaVita Kidney Care's quality of care aligns with providing the resources and education for those with chronic kidney disease and providing dialysis and integrated kidney care services to patients with end stage renal disease.

About DaVita Kidney Care

DaVita Kidney Care is a division of DaVita HealthCare Partners Inc., a Fortune 500(r) company that, through its operating divisions, provides a variety of health care services to patient populations throughout the United States and abroad. A leading provider of dialysis services in the United States, DaVita Kidney Care treats patients with chronic kidney failure and end stage renal disease. DaVita Kidney Care strives to improve patients' quality of life by innovating clinical care, and by offering integrated treatment plans, personalized care teams and convenient health-management services. As of Dec. 31, 2014, DaVita Kidney Care operated or provided administrative services at 2,179 outpatient dialysis centers located in the United States serving approximately 170,000 patients. The company also operated 91 outpatient dialysis centers located in 10 countries outside the United States. DaVita Kidney Care supports numerous programs dedicated to creating positive, sustainable change in communities around the world. The company's leadership development initiatives and social responsibility efforts have been recognized by Fortune, Modern Healthcare, Newsweek and WorldBlu. For more information, please visit DaVita.com.

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