

# Kidney Konnections

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The Bay Area Association of Kidney Patients is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization formed to educate and support Bay Area kidney patients. The BAAKP is affiliated with the Northern California Chapter of the National Kidney Foundation.

For questions or comments about this newsletter: [bay.area.kidney@gmail.com](mailto:bay.area.kidney@gmail.com) Or by mail to P.O. Box 2332 Menlo Park, CA 94026-2332

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## Summer Meeting Featured the Relationship of Calcium & Phosphorous Levels in CKD

By Anne Griffin

The Bay Area Association of Kidney Patients was pleased to have Dr. Luis Alvarez, M.D., PhD, Nephrologist with the Palo Alto Medical Foundation as our June 7, 2009 meeting featured speaker. Dr. Alvarez explained the roles of calcium, phosphate, Vitamin D, and the parathyroid hormone and the resulting effects on kidney patients in the development of cardiovascular and bone diseases.

Dr. Alvarez first looked back at the research in phosphate management over the last 90 years. He explored the underlying science behind phosphate and calcium control and discussed how compromised kidneys fail to filter phosphate out of the bloodstream. The parathyroid gland, phosphorus, calcium, and activated vitamin D are all intertwined in a complicated dance to retain calcium in your bones and excrete excess phosphorus.

In the past, physicians noted that many of their CKD patients had calcium deposits in various parts of the body, leading to possible heart disease and bone decalcification. One of the major causes of death in kidney patients is

cardiovascular disease, with calcification of the blood vessels as the underlying contributor. The lower the kid-



*Dr. Luis Alvarez addressing the BAAKP audience.*

ney function, the higher the risk of cardiovascular disease.

The controlling gland for the exchange of calcium and phosphorus is the parathyroid gland, located near the thyroid in the neck. Higher levels of PTH hormone alert nephrologists to possible problems. Vitamin D is activated by healthy kidneys, but this activation drops off when kidneys are functioning at less than 60%.

In addition to high phosphorus, low Vitamin D levels can also increase the secretion of parathyroid hormone, with the result that calcium is pulled from the bones. This results in bone disease

and possible osteoporosis. Many CKD patients take a prescribed form of activated Vitamin D daily.

It is especially difficult to remove phosphorus by dialysis. In the past, nephrologists tested various remedies to control phosphate absorption from food. One remedy was aluminum, which proved to have harmful long term effects. After 10 years of research, it was discovered that oral Calcium Carbonate successfully lowered blood phosphate levels to acceptable levels of less than 5.5 mg/dl (milligram per deciliter). Normal ranges are 2.5 to 4.9 mg/dl. When phosphorous levels are less than 5.5 mg/dl., the risks of bone decalcification, calcification of the coronary blood vessels and other parts of the body, as well as bone pain and itching, are reduced. Today, there are many more "phosphate binders" available and your nephrologist will select the correct medication for you.

Dr. Alvarez also stressed that in addition to any medication, a low protein / low phosphorus diet also plays an important role in controlling phosphorus.

Thank you Dr. Alvarez for such an informative and enthusiastic presentation!

## We Love Our Sponsors!

Special thanks go to Jeremy Pullman of Genzyme Therapeutics, manufacturers of Renagel and Renvela (phosphate binders) and of Hectoral (activated Vitamin D) for partially sponsoring this event. Jeremy reviewed Genzyme's pertinent products and provided free informational literature, including dietary specifics about phosphate control. This literature will also appear on our Library Table at upcoming events!

In addition, Genzyme has provided a \$1,000 grant to support our upcoming Fall 2009 through Summer 2010 Bay Area Association of Kidney Patients' meetings. Thank you Genzyme for all of your support!

*According to the Food and Nutrition Board, over the past 20 years phosphorus intake by Americans has increased 10-15%. Part of this increase is attributable to phosphate additives in processed food in all segments of the food pyramid because it is an inexpensive and effective way to tenderize meat and increase flavor.*

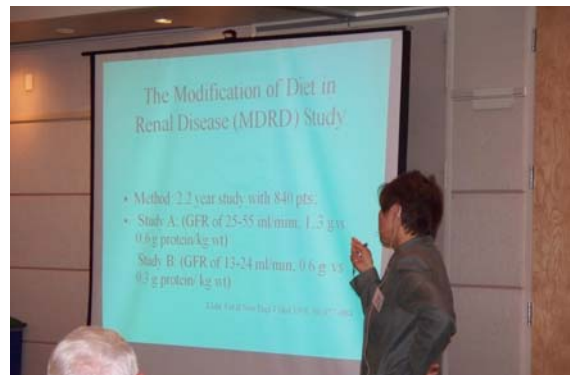
*You can spot hidden phosphorus by checking for variations of the word phosphate, such as phosphoric acid, sodium aluminum phosphate, pyrophosphate, polyphosphates and calcium phosphate.*

*Take a moment to check the ingredient list for foods that you recognize as being high in phosphorus such as baking powder, cheese products or nonfat dry milk.*

## The Importance of a Low Protein and Low Phosphorous Diet

Dietitian C. Amy Shiao, M.S., M.B.A., R.D. of Satellite Dialysis, Cupertino addressed practical aspects of controlling phosphorus in our everyday diet. The goal is to help end stage renal disease patients reduce phosphorus in the foods they eat from being absorbed into their bloodstream. A low protein and low phosphate diet is necessary to keep phosphorus levels in check and for phosphorus binders to work well. This starts with in the grocery store with reading the labels for hidden phosphorus sources. It is important to limit the consumption of protein to .6 to .75 grams/km weight for GFR < 25 and .12 grams/km for dialysis patients.

Remember, good health is going to require lifestyle modification and breaking some old habits including restricting your salt intake!



This newsletter is not intended to be a substitute for advice from your medical professionals. Please consult your physician or other medical professionals about any changes or additions you make to your kidney care.

## Other Local Kidney Support Groups & Meetings

### PKD Support Group

South Bay Support Group  
Leader: Clarisa Marcus  
Phone: (408) 334-9583  
Email [clarisanim@gmail.com](mailto:clarisanim@gmail.com)  
Meets 3rd Saturday of each month from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. in San Jose

East Bay Support Group  
Leader: Donald Kagan  
Phone: (925) 354-1548  
[donald@talentedtechs.com](mailto:donald@talentedtechs.com)

### T.R.I.O Transplant Recipients International Organization

Silicon Valley Chapter  
Meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm. El Camino Hospital, Cafeteria Meeting Room, 2500 Grant Road Mountain View, CA 94040  
[www.bayareatrio.org](http://www.bayareatrio.org)  
408-353-2169

### Contra Costa Dialysis Support Group "Patients Helping Patients"

4th Tuesday of each month  
January - October  
Carl's Junior Restaurant  
2280 Oak Grove Rd  
Walnut Creek, CA

**Contact:** Tom and Kathie McClish (916) 332-1086 OR Paul and Marie White (925) 934-4883  
**For:** Dialysis patients and their loved ones, staff members

### The National Kidney Foundation of No. California & No. Nevada

Has many resources available and sponsors many events.

For more info:  
[www.kidneynca.org](http://www.kidneynca.org)  
415-543-3303

**National Kidney  
Foundation**  
[www.kidney.org](http://www.kidney.org)

# BAAKP Team Raises \$13,580 in the San Jose NKF Kidney Walk!



Anne Griffin and Melissa Boccia explaining the Buffet of Choices to a NKF walker

BAAKP meeting attendees contributed as well; we'd like to thank you individually and as a group. This support indicates to your Steering Committee and the BAAKP walk team that you approve of our activities and want us to continue.

Walkers followed a course through downtown San Jose which started and ended at City View Plaza. Kidney donors and recipients were asked to wear a special orange scarf so they could easily be identified.

Many inspirational stories were exchanged throughout the day. The BAAKP Team

Local merchants donated refreshments and door prizes, the Road Dogs entertained the crowd with live rock music, and the "Kids Zone" provided various activities for the children. A great time was had by all. We look forward to seeing you there next year!



Susan Basler being massaged after the walk by Colleen Reilly, Personal Trainer

Members of the **Bay Area Association of Kidney Patients** and their supporters journeyed to downtown San Jose on Saturday June 6th to participate in the 3rd Annual NKF Kidney 5K Walk. The event was held at City View Plaza and attracted over 3,000 walkers, family members, and friends.

The BAAKP team had 38 registered walkers with 14 walkers raising a total of \$13,580! The donations will be used to fund activities and events to educate and support Bay Area Kidney Patients and their families. This is quite an achievement considering the current state of the economy. Many of our



Walt & Linda Umbach

***Educating and  
Supporting Bay Area  
Kidney Patients***

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Please visit our website at  
[www.BAAKP.org](http://www.BAAKP.org)  
for back issues of  
our newsletters and videos  
of our past meetings!

*Newsletter publication dates are November, February, May and August  
If you've received an extra copy of this newsletter, please pass it along!*

**SAVE THESE DATES!**  
**General Meetings:**

- **October 11, 2009**  
**Dialysis Choices**
- **January 10, 2010**  
**Post Transplant  
Management  
with the Stanford  
Transplant Team**
- **March 14, 2010**  
**Auto-immunity and  
Kidney Disease with  
Dr. Mark Genovese**

**Steering Committee  
Meetings**

**Second Wednesday of  
every month at 6:00 pm**

*If you would like to join us in the  
leadership of this group, we would  
love to have your help.*

*(Call for location)*

**[bay.area.kidney@gmail.com](mailto:bay.area.kidney@gmail.com)  
650-323-2225**

**October 11, 2009 Meeting to Spotlight  
“Dialysis Options”**

At our October meeting, we will explore the current modes of dialysis available to kidney patients today. Our featured speaker will be John Moran, MB, BS, FRACP, MACP, FASN, Senior Vice President, Clinical Affairs of Satellite Dialysis and Corporate Medical Director for Wellbound, a subsidiary of Satellite, who will discuss current research on the various dialysis treatment options.



Also present will be team members (nurses and social workers) of Wellbound and Satellite, explaining the different types of treatment and demonstrating the equipment. In addition to in-center hemodialysis, they will be discussing at-home peritoneal dialysis and the new home hemodialysis mo-

dality. There will also be a panel of patients describing their own experiences with dialysis. There will be ample opportunities for questions.

If you are a kidney patient possibly facing dialysis, currently a dialysis patient, or a friend or family member of a dialysis patient, this is a unique opportunity for you to learn and compare the various options available to kidney patients in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The meeting will take place at the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, 795 El Camino Real, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Palo Alto, CA 94301 on Sunday October 11, 2009 from 1 PM to 4 PM. To reserve your seat, please email us at [bay.area.kidney@gmail.com](mailto:bay.area.kidney@gmail.com) or call us at 650-323-2225. You may also fax your reservation to 650-327-0178 or mail to BAAKP, Box 2332, Menlo Park, CA 94026.