

Kidney Konnections

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Bay Area Association of
Kidney Patients

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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.

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UCSF Transplant Team Speaks About Kidney Transplantation

By Marco Martin

On January 9th, the Bay Area Association of Kidney Patients gave a happy welcome to Dr. Allison Webber and the Kidney Transplant Team from the University of California San Francisco. Dr. Webber presented the qualifications a kidney transplant recipient and donor must meet for a transplant at UCSF. Transplants are a key treatment in kidney disease because it prolongs a patient's life as well improves the quality of life. A transplanted kidney can come from either a living donor or a deceased person, with the former allowing for better outcomes over time. At this time, most kidneys come from a deceased donor. Once a patient's GFR (Glomerular Filtration Rate) is less than 20, they qualify for a transplant evaluation. Overall, expected wait times on a transplant list are five to eight years.

The goal for a person on the transplant waiting list is a compatible kidney. This is determined by the patient's blood type and if that patient has immunity to extracellular proteins (known as HLA) on the surface of a new available kidney. There are four main blood types. The table below shows the compatibilities of each blood type with other blood types.

	Recipient Blood Type			
Donor Blood Type	A	B	AB	O
A	Yes	No	Yes	No
B	No	Yes	Yes	No
AB	No	No	Yes	No
O	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Blood type "O" is called the "Universal Donor" because they can donate to every blood type. Blood type "AB" can receive donations from every blood type. As shown in the table, a blood type need not match, but merely be "compatible."



UCSF Kidney Transplant Team

A "positive crossmatch" means that the potential kidney recipient has preformed HLA antibodies to the potential donor's kidney which substantially increases the likelihood that the recipient will reject the kidney. Therefore a positive crossmatch means this kidney is not right for this recipient. A critical fact for a recipient to remember is that the immune system will always see the transplanted kidney as a foreigner and target it for destruction. Thus, anti-rejection medications must be taken for the rest of that new kidney's life. While the patient waits for a kidney, blood tests are periodically conducted to look for the development of new antibodies to HLA that may have developed since the last blood examination. Blood transfusions, infections, pregnancies and previous transplants may predispose a person to the development of anti-HLA antibodies.

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An important test that is sometimes done to evaluate a patient's candidacy for transplant is the profiling of the arteries in the pelvis and legs to detect Peripheral Vascular Disease. Since the transplanted kidney is connected to the iliac arteries (arteries that are in the pelvis that supply oxygenated blood to the legs) the presence of significant atherosclerosis in these arteries may preclude a kidney transplant.

The kidney transplant surgery lasts about 3-4 hours and the patient will be in the hospital 3-10 days. The new kidney is placed in a patient's pelvis rather than with the old kidneys, which remain in place. All patients undergoing a kidney transplant start off with about the same dosage of medications. The right amount of medications is unknown at first so personal adjustments are made after each blood test.

Once released from the hospital, the patient will continue to be monitored by a transplant team. It will take weeks, but a patient will gradually resume normal life activities, such driving and exercise. A transplant nephrologist will also monitor for diabetes since some of the anti-rejection medications may impair the body's handling of glucose (sugar). Be aware that about 40% of patients will be re-admitted to the hospital within the first six months after transplant. The reasons are mainly infection, surgical complications, and (yes) rejection. The patient is monitored by frequent clinic visits and blood tests.

Rejection of the transplanted kidney usually carries no symptoms and may be present despite a normal creatinine (the blood test used to follow kidney function). Biopsies are done at six months after transplant at UCSF to catch rejection that may be "subclinical" since significant damage to the kidney has to occur before creatinine levels increase.

The treatment of the kidney donor is as thorough as that of a recipient. A donor goes through a rigorous screening procedure that includes a social work evaluation, blood type determination, and crossmatch profiling with the patient. The decision to approve a donated kidney is ultimately that of the medical team after they have determined the donor's health will not be affected and that the donor has a good mental awareness of what is at stake. This surgery also lasts 3-4 hours and the hospital stay is a few days. Statistics demonstrate there is no increased risk of chronic kidney disease (CKD) to carefully selected donors compared to the general population.

There are cases when more risky kidneys (called ECD or Expanded Criteria Donor) are accepted – primarily for CKD patients over 60 and diabetics over 40, with the result that wait times are cut in half but the transplanted kidney may have a shortened lifetime. ECD kidneys come from older donors who may have had a history of high blood pressure or died from a stroke. A patient who agrees to accept these kidneys may still remain on the normal wait list. UCSF also has a special transplant program for patients infected with Hepatitis C. A patient can also register on a wait list in other geographical areas, but there is a possibility their insurance carrier will not cover the additional testing. Any accrued times can be transferred from one transplant center to another.

This and more detailed pieces of non-conventional information captivated and educated our audience. Video of the program can be accessed on our website.

Thank You to Our Presenters and Supporters

Thanks to all for such a great meeting. Thank you to the representatives of the University of California, San Francisco Kidney Transplant Team: Allison Webber, M.D.; Linda Moczowski, RN, CNN, Transplant Coordinator; Martha Ruelas, Kidney and Pancreas Transplant Manager; and Deb Tietje, RN, BSN, Kidney Outreach Coordinator. A huge thank you to the folks at the Palo Alto Medical Foundation who again have furnished a perfect venue for our educational meetings! A special thank you to Bel Rennels, who described the donation of her kidney to her niece. We also are indebted to Trader Joe's in Menlo Park for the gift basket for our speakers! Thank you also, Cheryl Werner of Astellas Pharmaceutical, for the brochures on kidney transplants.



Stay updated!

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www.BAAKP.org

Click the links if you are reading an electronic version of this newsletter.

Two Fundraisers Benefit BAAKP

7K Horseback Endurance Ride

It was a beautiful September Saturday morning when approximately 35 people gathered to celebrate Linda Umbach's 70th birthday and raise money for the BAAKP. Instead of a big party, Linda decided to host a 7K Ride at Webb Ranch and Family Farm in Portola Valley. She recruited 9 riders to ride in the Polo field and trot in the ring for approximately 2.5 hours. While the riders rode, party goers and well-wishers enjoyed a hot "Chuck Wagon" breakfast and lattes. Photos of the event were donated by photographer Rachel Phillips. Donors were able to contribute either online at BAAKP.org or at the ride. An anonymous donor volunteered to contribute a matched donation up to \$2,000.00. Linda raised \$2665.00 from 34 donors and with the anonymous donor's matching contribution, a total of \$4665.00 was raised for BAAKP! The event was so successful that BAAKP is exploring plans to repeat the event next year as a BAAKP fundraiser.



Riders: Susan Basler, Melanie Basler, Caroline Basler (daughter and granddaughters), Haydi Sowerwine, Colleen Reilly, Laura and Jim Jones, Martine Habib and Linda Umbach.

Basketball Tournament

Ryan Ferguson, who works for NxStage Home Hemodialysis and is an avid participant of the BAAKP, and the Mill Valley Community raised \$500 with one afternoon of basketball to thank BAAKP for our support of kidney patients. Printed t-shirts and pizza were sold at the Basketball Tournament to raise the money.



Mill Valley Basketball Team

Other Kidney Support Groups

<p style="text-align: center;">AAKP American Association of Kidney Patients</p> <p>Has many resources available both on their website & through their publications.</p> <p>3505 E. Frontage Rd. Suite 315 Tampa, FL 33607 800-749-2257</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.aakp.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">T.R.I.O Transplant Recipients International Organization</p> <p>Silicon Valley Chapter Meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm. El Camino Hospital, Conference Room E, 2500 Grant Road, Mountain View, CA 94040</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.bayareatrio.org 408-353-2169</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">San Francisco Polycystic Kidney Foundation</p> <p>For general PKD information, call: 1-800-PKDCURE</p> <p>For information about local groups, go to: www.pkdcure.org/sanfranciscochapter</p> <p>For chapter specific questions, please send email to: sanfranciscochapter@pkdcure.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The National Kidney Foundation of No. California & No. Nevada</p> <p>Has many resources available and sponsors many events. For more info: www.kidneyncanv.org 415-543-3303</p> <p style="text-align: center;">National Kidney Foundation www.kidney.org</p>
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Bay Area Association of Kidney Patients

Educating and Supporting Bay Area Kidney Patients

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Please visit our website at
www.BAAKP.org
to make a donation, get
back issues of
our newsletters, and view
videos of our past meetings.
Your help is greatly
appreciated!

Winner of the 2010 Kidney Patient Support Group Award from AAKP

SAVE THE DATE!

- **March 8, 2011, 1-4 pm**
Washington Hospital Kidney Seminar
and Health Fair in Fremont — BAAKP
will have a booth — Come join us!
- **March 10, 2011**
World Kidney Day!
- **March 20, 2011**
**Financial & Insurance Answers for
the Kidney Patient**
- **May 22, 2011**
Learning the Renal Diet

— — — — —
**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.*

bay.area.kidney@gmail.com

650-323-2225

“Financial and Insurance Answers for the Kidney Patient” Panel Discussion at Our March 2011 Meeting

On Sunday March 20, 2011 we are thrilled to present a panel discussion on financial and insurance matters that affect kidney patients. Panel participants include a representative from Washington Hospital Healthcare System leading off a discussion on **Insurance Questions**, a HICAP counselor with information about **Medicare**, a representative from California Pacific Medical Center discussing **financing a kidney transplant**. Other items covered will be **pre-existing conditions**, the cost of **dialysis**, and the types of commercial **insurance policies**. Bring your questions; now's the time to get the answers!

This FREE event will take place at the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, 795 El Camino Real, 3rd floor Conference Room, Palo Alto, CA 94301 on Sunday, March 20, 2011 from 1 PM to 4 PM. There will be ample time for audience questions, social interaction and patient support. Kidney-friendly refreshments will be served! To reserve your seat, please email us at bay.area.kidney@gmail.com or call us at 650-323-2225.