I wish to make a One-Time Donation to the National Kidney Foundation

☐ $20  ☐ $50  ☐ $80  ☐ Others $  
Mr / Mrs / Ms / Mdm / Dr: ____________________________________________
NRiC/FIN No.: ____________________
Address: ____________________________________________________________
Postal Code: _______________________
Tel. No.: (HP) ____________________ (C) ____________________ (H) ____________
E-mail: ______________________________________________________________

Please enclose a cheque/money order no. ____________________________ made payable to “NKF”.

☐ Please debit my VISA/ Master Card/ American Express/ Diners/ JCB card*
Card No.: ___________________________ Expiry Date: ____________
Last three numbers on signature panel. (For Amex card, please provide the 4-digit num-
ber above the card number)

Signature & Date: ____________________________

☐ I wish to join LifeDrops Monthly Donation scheme. Please send me a Direct Debit Authorisation (GIRO) form.

☐ I wish to upgrade my LifeDrops monthly donation. Please send me an upgrading form.

Switch to e-mail & “donate” the mailing cost saved!
Do you know that you actually “donate” to NKF every time you receive an e-mail from us? Yes, you donate as much as the mailing cost saved by opting for e-mail communication. Please provide us with your e-mail address if you have not done so!
☐ Yes, I prefer to receive e-mails from NKF.
Please e-mail me at: ____________________________________________________

“Gem of Life” cast visits NKF patients

On 3 December 2008, patients at the NKF Hougang-Punggol Dialysis Centre Ave 8, enjoyed a rare star-studded afternoon! The visit by four actors from Hong Kong TVB’s hit drama series “The Gem of Life” – Bowie Lam, Louise Lee, Maggie Shiu and Bosco Wong – proved to be a hit amongst patients! They distributed goodie bags and vouchers to the patients as an early Christmas gift. The stars also sat in for a presentation to know more about kidney disease and the various programmes that the NKF has in place to help them in their rehabilitation.
Caring for Our Patients

Light at the End of the Tunnel

Features

Encouraging Volunteerism

Your Health Metters

Safeguarding Your Health
Having been on dialysis for 4 years, 28-year-old Aaron knows, that the anxiety of waiting for a kidney transplant can be long and sometimes in vain. However, in late 2008, Aaron was very fortunate to be blessed with a kidney donated by his younger brother, Caleb.

Aaron contracted chronic nephritis due to Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (Lupus) as a young boy. Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease that can affect the joints and almost every major organ in the body, including the heart, kidneys, skin, lungs, and brain. In short, the immune system attacks the body.

His ordeal started when he had mumps. When he recovered from it, he had a burning sensation when he was passing out urine. At the same time, his legs were also swelling. His parents brought him to a Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioner for treatment and he was told that his condition was probably linked to kidney problems. He then went to see a specialist who told him that he had Lupus. Aaron was put on a series of daily medication such as steroids and immuno suppressants.

In September 2004, only 10% of his kidneys were functioning and he had to go on dialysis to survive. NKF provided him with subsidised dialysis. Four years into his dialysis, the doctor advised Aaron to go for a transplant.

On 29 Sept 2008, Aaron finally went through kidney transplantation to get a new lease of life and spent two weeks in the hospital.

A BROTHER’S GIFT OF LIFE

For 22-year-old Caleb, watching his brother Aaron’s physical suffering was not at all easy. But he admires Aaron’s fighting spirit and perseverance in facing these challenges in life. “I was elated that I had the opportunity to help my brother. I had wanted to do so 2 years back but at that point in time, my parents were not open about the whole idea. In my mind, I was thinking that if I could do my part to help my brother have more liberty in life, why not?”

“We’ve always been a close-knit family. My mother wanted to donate her kidney too but
“Saving my brother’s life was more important and I had to look at the bigger picture. With discipline and a healthy balanced diet, I can be like any other person leading a normal life.”

It is normal for anyone to consider the possible effects of donating one’s organ. For Caleb, the thought did cross his mind.

“Saving my brother’s life was more important and I had to look at the bigger picture. With discipline and a healthy balanced diet, I can be like any other person leading a normal life, except that I can’t do contact sports like boxing and rugby. The doctor advised that smoking and drinking should be avoided too.”

Caleb spent around 3 days under observation in the hospital after donating his kidney to Aaron. When asked to give some advice to people who are thinking of donating their organ, Caleb said, “One can still function as a normal person even after donating, but it is never easy to give a part of yourself to another person. Thus, I would advice others to be very sure of what they are doing, the reason behind their donation, and ultimately be ready for the sacrifice. I would definitely encourage this act as it would help a kidney patient a lot and I know what they have to go through without transplantation.”

LOOKING FORWARD WITH OPTIMISM
Throughout those difficult times, Aaron’s faith in God kept him going. Putting the dialysis days behind him, Aaron plans to be successful in his career as a Financial Consultant to ensure that the needs of his family are well-taken care of. He also plans to get married in 2 years’ time.

KIDNEY TRANSPLANTATION IN SINGAPORE
- In 2007, 563 people were listed for kidney transplant but only 46 transplants were performed in that year
- Average waiting time is 7 years (Source: Ministry of Health)
Rain or shine, she will be there. Three times a week, thirteen times a month, more than 1,500 trips over the past 10 years – the selfless efforts and commitment by volunteer Ms Low Siam Luan to help fetch kidney patients to the dialysis centre won her the “Outstanding Service Award” when the new NKF honoured its volunteers on 30 Nov 2008. The carnival was held in conjunction with the International Volunteer Day.

The motivation behind Ms Low’s commitment was her mother, a dialysis patient who passed away four years ago. As she fetched her mother to and from the dialysis centre and home, she got to know her mother’s friends at the Bukit Batok dialysis centre, and soon started fetching these friends too. Since then, she has been faithfully providing transport for more than 10 dialysis patients for the past 10 years! In her own simple yet powerful words, “I just can’t let go of them.”
At the carnival, many varieties of food and second hand items were sold at 25 stalls which were set up by the volunteers and staff of NKF, for the benefit of kidney patients. The proceeds from the sale went directly to fund the Christmas parties for patients at the dialysis centres. There were also performances by volunteers, staff and patients, adding cheers and atmosphere to the celebrations.

The NKF would like to thank all the volunteers who have been providing such joy and friendship to the patients. Here are the recipients of Outstanding Service Award for their passion and commitment to the patients:

1. Guan Weijiang | IT Consultant
2. Khoo Han Whatt | Businessman
3. Low Siam Luan | Homemaker
4. Anita Mui | Freelance Cooking Instructor
5. Simon Neo Teck Koon | Part-time Lecturer
6. Noorhayati Bte Abdul Rahman | Homemaker
7. Rose Ong Mui Kui | Homemaker
8. Tan Jui Ming | Purchasing Officer
10. Kelvin Sing | Safety Officer
11. Yap Lay Khim | Accounts Officer
12. Zainudin Bin Ali | Sales Manager

If you would like to volunteer in the NKF’s “Circle of Hearts” programme, please call 6299 0200 or email us at contact_us@nkfs.org

Showing the Way to a Healthy Lifestyle

NKF Senior Patient Care Technician, R Srikanthan (Bukit Batok Dialysis Centre) is one who believes in walking the talk. He believes that it is important for all of us to keep fit for our own sake. Exercise is even more crucial for kidney patients.

When Srikanthan considered signing up for the New Paper Big Walk on 18 October, 2008 along with his wife, he thought that it would be a good idea to get the patients involved too.

The New Paper Big Walk is a 5 km non-competitive walk from Suntec City's Fountain of Wealth to the Marina Barrage. Srikanthan has always been encouraging the patients to participate in previous Big Walks, but this is the first time so many patients have responded.

Each NKF dialysis centre also organises its regular walks for the patients and their family members to encourage them in leading a healthy lifestyle. This is also a great way for patients and nurses to bond.

NKF patients from Bukit Batok dialysis centre showed their determination to lead a healthy life by completing the 5 km walk led by Srikanthan, 1st from left (sitted)
Diabetes is a medical condition in which the blood glucose level is higher than normal. Normally, the pancreas produces a hormone called insulin which helps the glucose in the blood to enter the body cells where it is turned into energy. However, in a diabetic person, the insulin produced is not enough or not effective. Thus, the high blood glucose level will remain in the body and can lead to serious complications such as kidney failure, heart attack, stroke, blindness, and leg amputations. Around 50% of NKF patients are diabetic, and it is one of the leading causes of kidney failure in Singapore.

Sadly, diabetes is increasingly common amongst Singaporeans. And it may be due in part to unhealthy diet, lack of exercise and an ageing population. The good news is, diabetes can be controlled and complications avoided.

TWO TYPES OF DIABETES:

Type 1 Diabetes (more common in children and young adults) – the pancreas does not produce insulin. In such cases, insulin is needed for treatment, and complications are sudden and life-threatening.

Type 2 Diabetes (more common in adults) – insulin produced by the pancreas is not enough or does not work effectively. It can be controlled with proper diet and exercise but most diabetics would need some form of oral medication.

COMPLICATIONS OF DIABETES:

- Kidney failure that require dialysis
- Stroke and coronary heart disease
- Nerve damage
- Blurred vision leading to blindness
- Infections of hands and feet that may require amputation
- Infections of urinary system

Prevention is better than cure, thus it is better to go for regular screening, exercise at least five days a week (30 mins each), and eat healthily.

REGULAR EXERCISE:

Regular exercise should be part of everyone’s daily routine. It helps to:

- Reduce blood sugar level
- Improve blood circulation
- Strengthen the heart
- Control one’s weight
- Relieve stress

The new NKF has around 1000 diabetic patients. In order to help them manage this chronic disease, these patients are given a free kit to monitor their blood glucose at home.

Your Health Matters
HEALTHIER DIET
Our NKF Cookbook has some healthy dishes contributed by our patients as well as a certified dietician. Here are some general points you can take note:

**List of food items diabetic patients should avoid:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Item</th>
<th>Avoidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sweets, soft drinks, cakes, chocolates, sandwich biscuits</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread and potatoes</td>
<td>✓ in moderate amounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fried kway teow, chicken briyani, laksa lemak, hokkien prawn mee, fried chicken drumstick with skin, curries, sambals</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steamed or boiled fish, yong tau foo, chicken without skin, soupy porridge and noodles</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salted fish, eggs and vegetables, Bacon, ham, sausages and cheese</td>
<td>Limit to 3 times per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear soup, plain tea or coffee, unsweetened lime or lemon juice, plain or mineral water</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweets wines, beers and liqueurs</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you wish to purchase the NKF Cookbook, please call us at 6299 0200.

Safeguarding Your Health

FREE Health Screening for you!

The new NKF has been on a mission to reach out to the community by organising Dialysis Centre Open House events regularly since 2006. The motto behind this health screening exercise is simply paraphrased as, “If the community cannot go for the health screening, then we will bring the health screening to them”. Thus, every two months, one dialysis centre situated in the heartlands is opened to the public for free health screening. At the same time, the public is given an opportunity to walk through the dialysis centre to learn more about the services we provide to help kidney patients.

The health screening provided by NKF includes fasting Glucose and Cholesterol profile (minimum 10-hour fasting), Blood Pressure, Waist Measurement, Height & Weight Measurements, Body Mass Index, and Urine Analysis.

Dates of Dialysis Centre Open House:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 Mar 2009 (Sun)</td>
<td>BLK 113 Teck Whye Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 May 2009 (Sun)</td>
<td>BLK 101 Simei Street 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Jun 2009 (Sun)</td>
<td>BLK 203 Yishun Street 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For registration and more information, please call 6299 0200 or email to contact_us@nkfs.org.