

NephroCare *for me*

Summer 2015



News from around the world

Holidays by the sea

Different countries - different habits

Spotlight on: A scientist's mind on dialysis

Worth living

Faithful companions: pets and your health

Welcome!

Dear Readers,

If you have ever owned a pet, you know first-hand how a **furry friend enriches** every-day life. But maybe you did not know that having one is also proven to be good for your health. In this issue's Worth Living section, we explore the **health benefits** of pet ownership and hear a special personal story from a dialysis patient and proud cat owner.

Summertime is travel time and as the season comes into full swing, we at NephroCare want to show you how **a holiday** is not only possible but also **enjoyable** while on dialysis. Our staff selected two favourite European destinations – a charming coastal resort town in **Poland** and the entire country of **Italy** – and hope that our words inspire you to go for it and take a well-deserved break from the daily grind.

Of course, there are a multitude of other dialysis-friendly places to visit, a number of which you will find on our newly updated **patient website** at nephrocare.com. For a complete look at everything that is new online, turn to the article on pages 8-9.

As you pack away your remaining winter sweaters, why not take out some comfortable shoes and sportswear to ensure you stay **active and healthy** this summer. Get started with our summer exercise guide, also in the Worth Living section. In Different Countries, Different Habits, hear all about one Spanish patient and athlete who, thanks to his strong willpower, is able to continue pursuing his biggest passion, sport.

One last thing: in case you are still debating what to make for dinner tonight, be sure to read about **salads** on pages 30-33, with ideas and advice for dialysis patients.

We wish you a happy, healthy sunny season!

Your **NephroCare** Team

“Until one has loved
an animal, a part of one’s
soul remains unawakened.”

Anatole France, early 20th century French writer
and Nobel prize winner



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Holidays by the sea

A holiday is a time for discovery, relaxation and rejuvenation. With its new, modern Fresenius Medical Care Dialysis Centre, the spectacular Polish seaside resort of Świnoujście is ready to welcome you!

A gem of a town

Uniquely scattered across three large islands in Poland's lovely northwest corner, the spa town of Świnoujście is considered one of the oldest and prettiest health resorts along Poland's 1,032 kilometre-long Baltic coastline. One of the most popular and reputable holiday destinations in the area, each year thousands of tourists from Poland and abroad visit the town to enjoy its unique mix of attractions, from rest and relaxation activities to top-calibre medical treatments.

For decades now, patients in Świnoujście have valued the limestone soil and thermal

brine deposits, the array of modern medical facilities and their qualified staff, and the high standard of treatments. The area's pleasant coastal microclimate ensures mild temperatures all year round while the abundant sunshine and magnificent coastal scenery filled with fresh balmy air give it an exceptional overall appeal.

Activities and sights galore

One thing is for sure: you will never be bored in Świnoujście. From cultural highlights, to sports, to nature and wildlife, the town's offer abounds for curious tourists. History buffs will enjoy a visit to the church of Christ the King

and a stop at the neo-Gothic church of Holy Mary "Stella Maris". Both structures stand proud and tall at the charming town's historical centre. Another must-see is the local lighthouse. Built over 150 years ago, the 68-metre high structure bears the title of tallest lighthouse on the Baltic. 19th century constructions such as Angel's Fort and the Western Fort, today a museum and a venue for both concerts and art exhibitions, are further highlights.

Świnoujście's unusual geographical location and diverse terrain create a number of natural sights worth seeing. A walk through Zdrojowy Park's 40 hectares to admire the wide variety of trees, many of which are over 150 years old, is always a delight. About 20 km away, in the town of Międzyzdroje at the mouth of the Oder River, is one of Poland's 23 national parks, Woliński National Park. In addition to providing a home for a range of plants and animals, the park is also a sanctuary and breeding centre for European bison. Strolls along the local beaches, cycling tours, kayaking expeditions, and watching the breathtaking sunsets are also popular ways of taking in the natural beauty of the town and surrounding area.



Four fun facts about Świnoujście

- It is the only town in Poland to be set on three large islands, Usedom, Wolin and Karsibór, as well as a scattering of 44 small, uninhabited islets.
- On Usedom island, Świnoujście borders the German seaside resort of Ahlbeck.
- The number of year-round residents hovers just under 42,000.
- During the Thirty Years' War from 1618-1648, the city officially belonged to Sweden.



Dialysis centre enriches the region

Since 2013, people with chronic kidney disease have been able to enjoy the splendour of Świnoujście thanks to Fresenius Medical Care's Dialysis Centre. In fact, it is the first and



only dialysis centre in the seaside town. Offering convenient, high-quality dialysis treatment locally has enormously boosted the town's appeal as a tourist destination for those dependent on the therapy. "Our dialysis unit is ready to accept patients for holiday dialysis both in the summer and throughout the year," says Dr Marek Myślak, Director of the Świnoujście Dialysis Centre, who is also a nephrologist and transplant specialist.

Located on the grounds of the Świnoujście Spa in a recently refurbished and re-modelled

space in the Rusalka Centre of Rehabilitation, the dialysis centre is new. Accommodating persons with disabilities is easy: the main entrance is wheelchair-accessible and a lift takes patients directly to the dialysis area on the second floor. The two dialysis treatment rooms with a total of 12 stations can accommodate up to 70 patients.

Treatment in detail

During your stay in Świnoujście, a team of four physicians and six nurses, all with extensive experience in dialysis centres and on renal wards, try to make sure you receive excellent dialysis treatment that's both comfortable and reliable.

The centre is equipped with modern Fresenius Medical Care systems for high-flux haemodialysis, a highly-effective therapy that reduces the risk of cardiovascular complications. Disposable dialysis filters are used exclusively at the centre, and transport to and from the centre from your residence is provided throughout your holiday. Even entertainment is at your fingertips: each dialysis station features a television set and personal headphones. All you have to do is sit back and relax.

The competent team at the Fresenius Medical Care Treatment Centre in Świnoujście ensures that your treatment continues as usual while on holiday, and that it follows the recommendations of your home dialysis centre and regular doctor. So you and your nearest and dearest can rest assured and relax knowing that treatment will keep you at your healthiest while on holiday.

"Świnoujście is not just about sea and sand – it is also about rambles through the beautiful woods, leisurely strolls around the park, and exploring the Old Town and its monuments, which can be visited all year round. Thanks to our close cooperation with the spa, we are also able to arrange for qualifying dialysis patients to come here for rehabilitation holidays", Dr Marek Myślak explains.



Planning your holiday

The Fresenius Medical Care Dialysis Centre in Świnoujście accepts holiday dialysis patients all year round. Reservations can be made by contacting the centre directly or via the Fresenius Medical Care Poland head office in Poznań.

Fresenius Medical Care Dialysis Centre, Świnoujście

Phone: +48 91 3265655
or +48 66 5485063
Fax: +48 91 3265651
Email:
dializygoscinne.swinoujscie@fmc.pl

Fresenius Medical Care Poland head office

Phone: +48 61 8392 605

Getting there

Depending on your point of departure, Świnoujście is easy to reach by car, plane, bus or train. Ferries from the mainland to the town depart regularly all year round.

www.nephrocare.com

Enhanced resources for patients on NephroCare website

New content, new inspiration for living well: on the recently re-launched nephrocare.com website, patients now have access to a broader range of information about dialysis and healthy living with chronic kidney disease.

At NephroCare we know that for renal patients and their relatives the internet is an important source of information. With more and more patients looking online for basic information about kidney disease, possible treatment options, help, advice and useful ideas about retaining quality of life as a renal patient, we recently refreshed our patient website to better cover topics that are important to your treatment and well-being. Let us have a closer look at what is new!

Understanding kidney disease

No matter which stage of kidney disease you are in, you likely have questions about how your life might change and what you need to know. You may also be interested in learning more about the kidneys' role in your body and what happens when they stop working as they should. The section '**Kidney & Kidney Disease**' offers insight into the kidneys, all stages of kidney disease and treatment options, as well as related conditions. New to the website are valuable resources for people diagnosed with renal failure but not yet on dialysis (early-stage kidney disease). Now recently diagnosed persons and their families can learn more online about what their diagnosis means and what they can do to help

protect their kidneys. Complementing this is comprehensive information about diabetes along with how kidney disease can affect the cardiovascular system.

All about treatment

Familiarising yourself with different treatment options is an important first step after learning that you will need dialysis. From getting prepared for treatment, to selecting a centre, to actually beginning therapy, the sections '**In Centre Treatments**' and '**Home Treatments**' keep you well-informed about your dialysis treatment options. New to this part of the website is thorough information about treatments performed at home, including an overview of the two choices in the sub-sections '**Haemodialysis @ Home**' and '**Peritoneal dialysis**'. If you are interested in it, browse the '**Home Treatment**' section to learn more about performing therapy from the comfort of your own four walls.

Speak to your doctor to find out if home treatment is a possibility for you.

Take a holiday

Travelling and dialysis: is that even possible? We can assure you it usually is! Certainly you

and your family deserve a healthy break from daily life so simply turn to the all-new '**Holiday dialysis**' section to learn how to plan a dialysis-friendly getaway. Both haemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis patients will find in-depth advice and insight about continuing treatment away from home. Using the clinic finder, haemodialysis patients can easily locate a NephroCare dialysis centre to reserve a spot for holiday dialysis.

New Feel uncertain about travelling? Let our '**Patient experience**' section with first-hand travel accounts show you that going on holiday is doable. If you are unsure of where to go, browse the '**Country specials**' area, a growing collection of feature stories with travel highlights and ideas.

Get reliable help & advice

It is perfectly normal to have questions about living with kidney disease. In fact, it is essential for patients to be well-informed about their condition and treatment because lifestyle and healthy habits play key roles in good care and outcomes. Our expanded '**Help & advice**' section includes additional topics pertinent to patient self-care.



Now you will also find information on skin care and medication as well as how to build a support team to help deal with the emotional side of a chronic illness.

Nutrition

Good nutrition is an important part of your therapy. In the '**Nutrition**' section, you will find comprehensive information about good eating habits that complement the diet you and your dietician developed together. While kidney disease does require paying attention to what you eat, you still can (and should!) eat a wide variety of delicious foods. Search the '**Good Food Recipe Library**' for kidney-friendly dishes and flavours that you and the whole family can enjoy!

GO ONLINE!
www.nephrocare.com

Diabetic foot

Our series of articles looking at diabetes focuses this issue on another diabetes related complication – **diabetic foot**. As we saw in the last edition diabetic foot is a side-effect of diabetic vascular disease: poor circulation means your extremities do not receive enough oxygenated blood which can lead to various complications. Another cause of foot problems in diabetic patients is nerve damage.

Diabetic foot can affect anyone with diabetes and refers to any complication or pathology which occurs as a direct result of diabetes mellitus. There are various complaints including ulcers, infection and neuropathic osteoarthropathy, also known as Charcot's Foot.

The two main problems that frequently affect diabetics – nerve damage and poor circulation – can both lead to blisters and skin lesions which, if left untreated, can become infected and cause serious problems, in very extreme cases to the amputation of toes or feet. Prevention and appropriate foot care are therefore essential in order to detect prob-

lems early and minimise the consequences through appropriate therapy and care. Let's first try to understand the causes and see what you can do to take good care of your feet.

The most frequent component of diabetic foot is **diabetic foot ulcer**. An ulcer is a sore or wound that does not heal: the skin has broken down and the tissue beneath is exposed. Diabetes interferes with the body's natural wound healing process which means that lesions and blisters that heal quickly in a healthy person can quickly become infected if you have diabetes.



Ulcers frequently start as the result of small cuts, blisters, or burns. They can also occur due to an ill-fitting shoe, a stone or a rough edge in your shoe that continuously rubs against your foot until the skin blisters or breaks.

Diabetes patients are also prone to nerve damage (**neuropathy**) which occurs as a result of having higher blood sugar levels over an extended period of time. Chronic nerve damage can cause dry skin, and on your feet this can result in calluses and cracked skin. When the skin cracks bacteria can enter and cause infection. As nerve damage also leads to a loss of sensation in the feet, the blisters and sores which appear on calluses or other numb areas of your feet may go unnoticed and as you continue to walk on the "injured" foot their condition is aggravated and the wounds can easily become infected by bacteria.

Treatment for foot ulcers

If left untreated the consequences of foot ulcers can be serious, but luckily ulcers usually respond very well to treatment. If you suspect that you have a foot ulcer, speak to your doctor straightaway. The first step often is to put

a protective dressing on the ulcer to prevent infection and give it the chance to heal. A nurse will replace the dressing regularly. You may also be referred to a podiatrist to remove any hard skin that could prevent the ulcer from healing, and if there is infection you may be prescribed antibiotics. Depending on the position and severity of the ulcer you may be advised to wear special diabetic shoes, or may be fitted with a brace or cast to take pressure off the ulcer and allow it to heal faster. In some cases a hospital stay for specialist treatment could be necessary, e.g. a small operation to remove dead tissue or to drain off pus.

In order to prevent ulcers it is very important that you check your glucose levels regularly and keep them under control. You should also inspect your feet every day and check for cuts, blisters or any other changes.

As poor-fitting shoes are the main source of cuts and blisters on your feet, take care to choose your shoes wisely. Try to wear leather, suede or canvas shoes and avoid shoes made of plastic or other materials that don't allow your feet to "breathe". Make sure your shoes fit well, aren't too tight and don't rub.

Shoes with laces or Velcro are ideal, so you can adjust them easily as needed.

Neuropathic osteoarthropathy is another condition which can affect the feet of diabetics as a result of damaged nerves. Also called **Charcot's foot** (after Jean-Martin Charcot, a French neurologist), this condition causes weakening of the bones of the foot in patients who have significant nerve damage.

As the bones get weaker micro-fractures can occur and in severe cases this may cause the joints to collapse. As a result of the nerve damage you may have reduced sensation in your feet and may not be able to feel pain, trauma or changes in temperature. This means that you will likely continue walking on the injured foot, compounding the fracture and making the injury worse. As you continue to walk your foot may also change shape and become deformed. These deformities are a further risk factor for foot ulcers to occur.

If your foot starts to feel hot or swollen after a minor bump or trauma it could be a first sign of Charcot's foot. The foot may or may not be painful, there may be redness and/or swelling and the affected foot may feel warmer to the

touch than the other. If you notice these symptoms you should contact a doctor immediately for advice.

Treatment for Charcot's foot

In the early stages where the bones are weaker but not fractured your foot may be put in a cast to limit damage and prevent deformity. The cast will immobilise your foot and give it the chance to heal. In more advanced cases, surgery may be needed to realign the broken and deformed bones.

Foot care

If you are a diabetes patient it is very important that you take good care of your feet by following a good foot care regime. You should



also inspect your feet daily to check for any possible signs of ulcers or other problems and discuss any symptoms you find with your doctor. If you have a podologist or a diabetologist, discuss any issues or doubts with him, otherwise please speak to a doctor, e.g. at your NephroCare centre.

You should consult a doctor if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Sore, red, swollen, or painful lesions or blisters on toes or feet
- Cracked skin which doesn't heal
- Nail tenderness or thickening
- Foot or nail fungus
- Any signs of infection, swelling, or discharge
- Changes to existing ulcers or surrounding skin

If you carry out these checks regularly you should be able to detect any potential problems early, and by initiating prompt and effective treatment you can minimise the development of complications. If you have difficulties seeing or reaching your feet to do this, ask a member of your family to help you check your

feet every day or speak to a doctor or nurse at your dialysis centre.

Remember: It is also very important that you talk to your doctor if you are having difficulty keeping your glucose levels under control.

Your daily foot routine

- Check for foot injuries every day
- Wash your feet daily with soap and warm water and dry carefully.
- Keep your feet warm and dry. Use a neutral cream to keep your skin soft and prevent it from cracking,
- Use antifungal spray or talcum powder to prevent fungal infections
- Cut your nails regularly and use a pumice stone (never use sharp instruments) to remove calluses
- Don't walk barefoot
- Choose comfortable leather or canvas shoes
- Disinfect your shoes regularly (with a formalin swab)
- Don't smoke: smoking reduces oxygen supply to your feet and increases the risk of complications

One hundred candles: celebrating a very special birthday!

In August 2014 the staff of NephroCare Salerno had the great honour of celebrating a landmark birthday for a very special patient: Adele Fumo from NephroCare Salerno turned 100 years old!

It's not every day we have a centenarian in our midst, and Dr. Domenico Bonanno (Medical Director) and the staff of NephroCare Salerno wanted to be sure they gave Adele a day to remember. So when she arrived for her dialysis session they surprised her with a beautiful bunch of flowers and a special 100th birthday



cake. All the staff and her fellow patients were delighted to participate and share Adele's special day with her, and Adele was very touched by their kindness. And for Adele the

celebrations didn't stop there! She later celebrated her special milestone in a restaurant together with over 100 family members and friends.

Despite her 100 years, Adele is actually quite young in terms of dialysis as she only started treatment four years ago. In fact, Adele has always enjoyed excellent health, but in 2007 she was diagnosed with secondary renal disease and high blood pressure, and when the renal insufficiency worsened and other symptoms appeared, her doctors advised her to prepare for dialysis.

So in the summer of 2010 Adele underwent a small procedure to create her vascular access. In April 2011 she started regular haemodialysis sessions at NephroCare's Emodial dialysis centre, moving to the brand new NephroCare centre in Salerno when it opened in December 2014. Although dialysis meant a change to her daily routine, Adele tells us that the NephroCare staff made this new part of her life so much easier, describing them as wonderful people who treat her very kindly.

The story of Adele's long life starts in another part of the Mediterranean: she was born in



Marseille on the south coast of France in 1914 and moved with her family to Salerno, Italy when she was just six years old. At first everything was strange and new, starting not least with the Italian language! But Adele learned quickly, doing well at school and successfully completing her secondary school education. Upon leaving school she passed an exam to become a state employee, and started her first job as a clerical worker at the

Prefecture. After four years she left the Prefecture and began working for the Post Office where she remained for many years.

When she was still quite young she met and married her husband, Raffaele from Salerno. Raffaele, or "Bebè" as he was known to his friends, worked for an agricultural consortium and Adele remembers him with great fondness, a wonderful man who always treated her with immense love and respect and who was kind and generous to everyone. She remembers one very special example of his kindness, when Bebè, hearing about a poor family who had no money to celebrate Christmas took the goat they had bought for their own Christmas dinner and gave it to them. Together Adele and Raffaele had two children, a son and daughter, both retired now, as well as four grandchildren and so many great-grandchildren that Adele has lost count!

Adele has always led a very active life. As a girl she excelled at sports, and in particular she loved anything related to swimming. Throughout her working life she divided her days between her job and taking care of her home and family. To help her juggle these



tasks she had the support of a home help, a lady she was extremely fond of and thanks to whom she was able to both raise her family and continue to work. Nevertheless Adele is very proud of the fact that she always found the time to prepare delicious homemade meals for her husband: her speciality is “pasta al forno”, a tasty Italian favourite where rigatoni pasta is mixed with meatballs, ricotta, tomato sauce and cheese and then baked in the oven!

Adele has always loved to travel and in particular remembers a very special week she and her family spent discovering the sights of Rome. As a family they didn’t have pets, but Adele did once keep two birds in a cage who filled her house with beautiful birdsong. In fact music is one of Adele’s passions, and she especially loves the traditional Neapolitan songs (which she happily sings for the staff at the NephroCare centre!). Having lived on the coast all her life, first in Marseille, and then in Salerno, it’s perhaps no wonder that her other great passion is the sea! Adele remembers many happy summers spent sunbathing, playing on the beach and swimming in the waves with her friends, until by the end of the summer she was as brown as a berry!

Adele comes to the centre three times a week for dialysis and responds very well to the treatment. During her dialysis sessions she likes to relax by watching television and in particular enjoys watching talk shows. She has a great sense of humour and has fun teasing the nurses.

Recently Adele has started to say she’s a little tired and is starting to feel her age. At the end of her dialysis sessions she says goodbye to the medical staff, joking that she won’t be coming to the next session, “after all I’m a hundred now and I have the right to a rest!”.

One hundred years is indeed a landmark achievement and the staff of NephroCare Salerno look forward to welcoming Adele for a long time to come. Asked what is the secret of her long life, Adele replies that even when life gets tough we should never give up, and above all, should never get angry and always stay positive. “Anger and hatred are like poisons that eat you up from inside,” she says, “be happy, wear a smile and life will reward you with love and happiness”. Wise words from a very special lady who obviously knows the secret of a long and happy life. Happy birthday Adele and thank you!

All good things come in twos!

In the last year NephroCare Italy has celebrated not one but two very special 100 year old patients! Emanuela Saglioccolo was born in 1914 in Naples. A seamstress by trade, Emanuela has two sons and two daughters now all in their sixties and seventies. Emanuela has a tumor in the bladder and so suffers from a certain degree of renal insufficiency although she is not at the stage that she needs dialysis treatment.



Once a month, Dr. Annalisa Ciotola, Medical Director of NephroCare’s dialysis centre in Quarto, visits Emanuela at home to check on her health. Although her kidneys aren’t able to clean all the waste products from her blood, Emanuela is generally still in good health. She attributes her long life to following a healthy Mediterranean diet, good old tap water and lots of good company! Happy birthday Emanuela!

In 2015 Adele and Emanuela both celebrate their 101st birthdays! Emanuela Saglioccolo in February 2015, Adele Fumo in August 2015.

Congratulations and best wishes to both these special ladies!

La dolce vita – life the Italian way

When it comes to living the good life, *la dolce vita*, Italians seem to have it mastered. Enviably weather, delicious cuisine and the laid-back Italian way of living: it's no wonder Italy is a best-loved tourist destination.

Even if you lack Italian blood, you can experience Italy on holiday thanks to NephroCare's wide network of Italy-based centres, all of which provide holiday dialysis.

On the map

With its remarkable geographical diversity spanning over 1,185 kilometres from top to bottom, Italy has something to offer for every taste. From the peaks of the Alps in the north, to the beautiful seas to the east, south and west, to the rolling hills and beautiful ancient vineyards that define many of the country's interior landscapes. The pleasant Mediterranean climate ensures hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters, though the climate can vary slightly locally. If you have flexible travel dates, book a holiday for spring or autumn. Crowds are smaller in the touristy areas and you'll avoid the heat of summer, which can be unbearable at its peak.

One country, many cultures

Italy is as culturally diverse as its landscapes and climate. In terms of culture, Italy's northernmost residents have more in common with Austrians and Bavarians than with Southern Italians. As one famous saying goes "For every church in Rome, there's a bank in Milan". While

this is a huge generalisation, many would agree there is a cultural divide between the North and the South. Nevertheless, each region offers its own unique trove of treasures to discover.

Buon appetito – enjoy your meal!

Much more than just pizza and pasta, arguably Italy's most famous international exports, Italian cuisine is nutritious, delicious and full of variety. Its focus on seasonal, regional ingredients and simple preparation reflects the essence of the so-called Mediterranean diet. Tourists often wonder what the secret to Italy's amazing food is, but actually there is no big secret at all: it's simply traditionally grown and raised ingredients that are eaten at their peak. No wonder the Slow Food movement has its roots here!



The heights of Italy's North

Mountains and lakes are probably not the first associations you have with Italy. But in the country's northern territory they set an awe-inspiring backdrop for daily life. Each year in winter countless tourists come to the Alps to hit the ski slopes. Come warm weather, hikers abound along the beautiful mountain paths or relax along the shores of Lake Como, Lake Maggiore and Lake Garda in the spectacular lake district. Must-see cities in the north include the world fashion capital of Milan, Verona, the setting of Shakespeare's masterpiece *Romeo and Juliet*, and, of course, the utterly romantic Venice, with its maze of canals and waterways that link a total of 117 islands.

Don't be surprised if you encounter rice here more often than pasta: the northern region of Lombardy is also home to the delicious creamy rice dish known as risotto.

Under central Italy's sun

The epicentre of the Italian Renaissance, the city of Florence is a must-see on a visit to the central Italian region of Tuscany. The city bursts with some of the world's greatest treasures, including the Uffizi Gallery where

visitors can admire works by Botticelli, da Vinci, Tiziano and many other famous European artists, and the Accademia Gallery, well known as the residence of Michelangelo's statue of David. It's also worth taking a stroll across Ponte Vecchio, the oldest bridge in Florence, to admire the scenery and browse the shops that line it.

Just 43 km from Florence lies the immaculately preserved medieval city of Siena. If you happen to set foot in the city on 2 July or 16 August you're in for a special sight: twice a year The Palio, a traditional bareback horse race from the Middle Ages, takes place on Piazza del Campo at the heart of Siena. Along its stunning coastline, Tuscany also boasts the iconic Leaning Tower of Pisa.

Landlocked Umbria may not offer direct access to the sea, but it's full of delightful towns and villages and lovely panoramas. Drive through the windy countryside roads and go village hopping, being sure to stop at the charming villages in the Vale of Spoleto. Pink-stoned Assisi is also a popular destination, especially among pilgrims tracing the footsteps of St. Francis who was born and buried here.



All roads lead to Rome

Aptly nicknamed “The Eternal City”, Rome, Italy’s capital, is a vibrant, colourful city in the Lazio region with strong historical roots. In contrast to places like Florence, where visitors can feel they’re surrounded only by tourists, in this city on the Po River, you’ll rub elbows with plenty of natural-born Romans. Must-see sights include the Colosseum where the gladiators once competed, the Pantheon, originally a temple to the Roman gods that dates back to 2 B.C., and Vatican City, the Catholic church’s headquarters and home to another of Michelangelo’s masterpieces: the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

The southwest coast

A visit to the Campania region, located just south of Lazio, is an encounter with an array of fascinating cities and sites. In Naples, the third largest city in Italy, explore the ancient streets and monuments. In pizza’s birthplace, make sure to treat yourself to a memorable meal. When scouting out a place to eat, remember that the most delicious, authentic pizzas are cooked in wood-fired ovens.

From Naples, you can quickly reach many of the region’s other attractions. The archaeo-

logical site of Pompeii is around 25 kilometres to the southeast while the foot of Mount Vesuvius, which famously erupted to bury Pompeii in AD 79, is just 9 kilometres to the east. If you’ve hired a car, cruise the coastal road to the south and enjoy breathtaking views of the glittering Amalfi coast.



The bottom of the boot

In Italy’s southernmost territories are the regions of Apulia (Puglia in Italian), the heel of the boot, and Calabria, the toe. These lesser-explored areas are a delight to visit. Historically a farming region, Puglia offers both charming inland landscapes dotted with orchards, olive groves and traditional trulli dwellings, adorable white-washed limestone houses. Along the magnificent 840 kilometres of coastline there are jagged cliffs, wild white-sand beaches and smaller crowds. A further highlight: the baroque city of Lecce.

If you had to describe Calabria in one word the choice is obvious: hilly. Only around 10% of the area’s land lies flat, thanks mostly to the Apennine mountain range that forms the backbone of the region. Historically, the mountainous terrain protected inhabitants from attack as they could easily escape into the thickly-forested mountains. Today much of the area is protected as a national forest, sparing it from the development that overruns many parts of Italy. In the interior, Calabria’s landscapes are covered with prickly pear, a refreshing cactus-like fruit, as well as olives, peaches and pears. It’s also blessed with a wide variety of beaches, from pebbly to sandy. Towns worth visiting include Pizzo and Tropea, and if you do venture all the way to Calabria, you must try a tasty spreadable sausage called ‘nduja.

Just across from Calabria to the west lies Sicily, the largest island in the Mediterranean. Its location has long made it a crossroads between Africa and Europe and the island boasts a rich, diverse history as well as remarkable geographical landmarks. The eastern side of the island is punctuated by Mount Etna, Europe’s largest active volcano. The colourful city of Palermo, set directly on

the sea with its eye-catching Arab-inspired domes, scattering of green gardens and bustling Vucciria market, is worth a stop if you venture to the northwest corner.

Here we’ve just scraped the surface of all the sights, sounds and scents to absorb and enjoy in bella Italia. Why not discover the rest for yourself!

Arranging holiday dialysis

Before you set out on your journey, contact the nearest NephroCare centre to let them know you’ll be coming in for dialysis. Italy has 41 NephroCare centres in all, but because the country is large, ensure a successful, healthy holiday by planning your itinerary around the centres’ locations. NephroCare centres in Campania, Lazio, Marche, Molise, Lombardy, Puglia, Calabria and Sicily would be pleased to welcome and care for you while you enjoy la dolce vita.

A helpful tip: our clinic finder at <http://www.nephrocare.com/clinicfinder> gives you an excellent overview of all our dialysis centres in Italy and beyond.

Special interview: Nothing comes between Ricardo & sport

An avid sportsman all his life, Ricardo García Sala was devastated to learn at 26 that he had chronic kidney disease. Determined to not let the diagnosis change who he is and what he loves, Ricardo found the inner strength to continue sport and live a fulfilling life – thanks in great part to dialysis. The local NephroCare team at the centre in Orihuela, Spain spoke with him to hear more about his personal story.



? **It's great to speak to you, Ricardo. You have an inspiring story about perseverance to share but let's start by hearing a little about yourself.**

My name is Ricardo García Sala and I was born in 1971 in Benejúzar, a small town in the coastal province of Alicante, Spain. Almost 20 years ago, when I was 26, I learned I had chronic kidney disease and at some point would have to go on dialysis to keep me alive.



? **Reading, cooking, automobiles: We all have passions in life and yours has always been sport. Did that change after being diagnosed with kidney disease?**

Sport has always been and will always be my passion. I started playing handball when I was just eight years old. After receiving my diagnosis, I had to officially drop out of the team, though I continued training as long as I could. Three years later, when I was 29, I started dialysis. No question that it was hard news to accept at such a young age, with a lifetime to live ahead of me. Even so, I'm lucky dialysis was an option and that I was able to train on days when I didn't have treatment.

? **Wow, that's amazing! Certainly people would have understood if you stopped training so what drove you to stick with sport?**

Although it took a big effort on my part, my desire to be a successful athlete was stronger than my fatigue. I tried to balance sport and treatment as best I could by establishing a weekly routine that worked for me: Tuesdays and Thursdays I ran for 45 minutes; Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays I went to the centre for dialysis. Even though I could not participate, by attending the handball matches of my teammates I still felt like part of the team.

? **Anyone on dialysis or with a friend or loved one undergoing therapy knows its value, but dialysis can be physically and emotionally challenging at times. How did you cope and remain optimistic?**

My first years of treatment were bearable. After I decided to put my name on the transplant list and the waiting started, the NephroCare team at the dialysis centre never stopped encouraging me and taught me to live in the moment. Deep down in my heart, I was thankful for dialysis. After all, it was saving my life! However, my mind was like a stopwatch, counting the days, hours and minutes since I last played sport. In retrospect, it is funny to think how impatient I was but it kept me motivated!

? **Though transplantation isn't for everyone, and it comes with advantages and disadvantages, you decided it was right for you. What's your transplant story?**

Well, trying to get a donor kidney involved a lot of waiting and feelings of helplessness. During my honeymoon in Tenerife, I got the call I had awaited for so many years: they had a kidney that might be a match and I needed to return quickly to my referral hos-



pital. But that day there were no return flights so we missed the first chance at a transplant. Even so my wife encouraged me to continue enjoying our holiday, and we did.

? **But ultimately you got a second chance, right?**

Yes, I certainly did! Time passed and finally one day – on April 28, 2006, after 4 years and 10 months of treatment – my time arrived: I received a matching donor kidney. I was lucky that the operation went well and



after recovering, I was able to take up sport again but this time I started with mountain biking. Little by little I back got in shape and I felt better and stronger each time I trained. That is when I decided to join the local cycling club in Benejúzar.

? So thanks to dialysis, and later transplantation, you were able to pursue activities you enjoyed before your diagnosis, with some modifications. For example, switching from handball to cycling. What role does cycling play in your life today?

It is much more than just a hobby: since joining the club I have participated in as many mountain bike races as possible. In 2012 I completed my first race in Guardamar del Segura, a nearby coastal town in Alicante, followed by San Miguel de Salinas, an inland village in the same area. In 2014 I did San Miguel de Salinas again, Albaterra, and the hardest course of all, Crevillente. I also cycled three times from Espinardo to Caravaca de la Cruz, a distance of 90 km. These are all very demanding courses.

? What's on your mind while racing?

I am a back-of-the-pack racer, to use the cyclist term, but for me racing is about over-



coming personal challenges, not about winning. What counts most is participating and finishing, and that is what I focus on. After all I have been through, when I get in the zone and people and friends are cheering me on – that's worth millions.

Anyone will tell you that setting goals helps accomplishing a task. Looking into the near future, what are your goals?

For 2015 I plan to participate again in Crevillente 2015 as well as in Marcha Vías del Tren, a race running from Potries in Valencia to Elche in Alicante. Last year the course was

135 km, with a total elevation gain of 1,400 metres. Let's see what they have in store for us this year!

Other than sport, what's important to you in life?

My dear wife, Loli, and my beautiful daughter, María. I am also lucky to have a job I enjoy – I am self-employed in the insurance industry – and almost 10 years after getting a transplant my physical fitness is phenomenal. I am grateful for the care I received from the medical staff, nurses and assistants at the Orihuela centre during my haemodialysis treatment, and of course from the nephrology team at the University Hospital of Alicante, led by Dr. Antonio Franco Esteve.

As you know from personal experience, it's so important for people with a chronic illness to keep things in perspective and focus on making the most out of life. What do you hope your personal story will inspire others to do?

I hope my words and my story of success will help people currently undergoing treatment for kidney disease. I believe part of successful treatment is in our heads: 'If you want to, you can.'



Spotlight on: A scientist's mind on dialysis

Kidney disease affects people from all walks of life. In this issue, we hear from 52-year-old Polish professor Rajmund Michalski who has a unique story to tell about personal struggles and triumph.

Academia was an obvious career path for Rajmund Michalski, who lives with his wife and daughter in Zabrze, a city in Southern Poland where he works as associate professor at the Institute of Environmental Engineering at the Polish Academy of Science. After obtaining his master's degree, Michalski went on to successfully complete his PhD in chemistry in 1994 and his post-doctoral studies to become a professor in 2007. Through his contributions as an author and researcher, and as a member of numerous science associations and scientific journal editorial boards, he has established a strong foothold in his field. To say that Michalski likes to be busy and stay busy would be an understatement – despite his diagnosis of chronic kidney disease.

Unexpected news

Until 1992, when he was nearing 30, Michalski had barely given his kidneys a second thought. That all changed when during a routine medical exam he learnt he had high levels of protein in his urine. Follow-up tests at the local hospital ensued and after undergoing a kidney biopsy, he received his diagnosis: glomerulonephritis, or inflammation of the kidneys.



Rajmund Michalski - understanding the chemistry of dialysis.

Initially, Michalski was able to continue living as usual without immediate need for dialysis, though his doctor told him this would change with time as his kidney function decreased. Eight years after first hearing his diagnosis, he noticed he was feeling more and more tired. Moreover, tests showed he had high levels of protein in his urine and although he was seeing his nephrologist every three

months, he could tell his condition was getting worse. It was time for a reality check. At the end of 2011, his doctor shared with him that test results indicated it was time to start dialysis.

Life-saving treatment

After reviewing options with his nephrologist, Michalski chose peritoneal dialysis (PD) for treatment, in great part because he felt it would give him more flexibility to continue pursuing the career he had worked so hard to establish. In January 2012, he had surgery to insert the catheter that allowed the dialysis solution to flow in and out of his abdomen and he learnt how to perform the treatment at home.

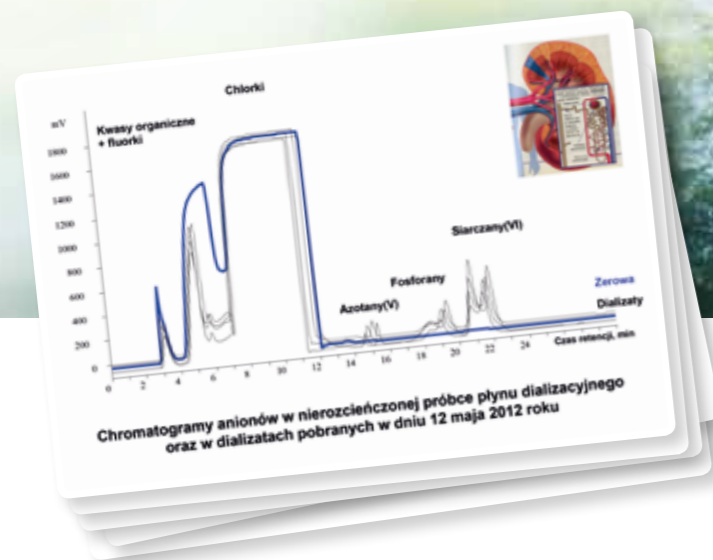
From the start, Michalski was open to transplantation, though he knew it came with both pluses and minuses. To keep his options open, his doctor placed his name on the list for a donor. On 26 January 2013, two years into PD treatment, and just a few days shy of his 50th birthday, he received a phone call that there might be a matching donor kidney. Michalski went directly to the hospital in Bydgoszcz where the surgery was successfully performed.

Today Michalski cannot help but smile when asked about the event: not only was the kidney his birthday present, but he also received the call about the available kidney on Polish Transplant Day, which is celebrated each year on 26 January to commemorate the anniversary of the first successful Polish kidney transplant in 1966.

A new research project

Because of his background in chemistry, Michalski understood his condition on a biochemical level. Before starting dialysis, it was important to him to know his precise medical outcomes at each doctor's visit. But knowing and understanding so much about what was going on with his body has its pros and cons: every time he sat down face-to-face with his nephrologist he was stressed about what he might hear.

Michalski dealt with this by keeping records documenting his physical condition. Doing so gave him the feeling of being in better control of his health and it had a positive effect on his emotions. Moreover, as a scientist and researcher, he was truly curious about what was happening inside his body. When his doctors saw his diagrams and charts



tracking everything from protein levels to his potassium and weight, they were absolutely amazed. Michalski even went so far as to prepare an analysis of the chemical composition of his fluids after dialysis!

Even now, after transplantation, he continues to closely monitor and analyse his health stats. Every time he sees his doctor he is very well prepared, arriving at each appointment carrying a chart with information about his medication and an analysis of his periodic blood tests. Recently he even submitted a scientific article about his experience to a journal for review and is eagerly awaiting a response about its publication.

Acceptance and moving forward

When Michalski first learnt about his disease at age 29, with a one-year-old child at home to care for, he felt his world come crashing down around him. His instinct was to try to forget about the disease's progression so he buried himself in his work. Continuing his usual lifestyle, including work and travel, also

helped him ignore and understate the reality of his condition. But the fact is he knew from the beginning he would start dialysis sooner or later. Still, when he finally started PD, he struggled to accept the catheter and fluid exchanges four times a day. As time passed and the exchanges became routine, Michalski realised that living with dialysis is bearable and simply another part of his life. He openly admits that facing kidney disease and undergoing dialysis has made him more patient and humble, two highly admirable traits.

Successfully uniting dialysis with work

Michalski has always been a career man, passionate and devoted to science and research. His tenures include Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology at the Silesian School of Management in Katowice as well as time spent in Japan. While on dialysis he held various positions at the Polish Academy of Science - Institute of Environmental Engineering, including Deputy Research Director.

During his time on PD, Michalski's goal was to stay active. There were times he worried that lack of energy and creativity would affect his scientific career but his persistence paid

Rajmund Michalski and his wife enjoying nature.

off. He continued his work, including organising conferences and travelling throughout Poland and the rest of Europe.

Paying it forward

Though Michalski is not currently on dialysis, he continues to reach out to and support other dialysis patients. He is a proud member of Poland's National Association of Dialysed Patients for which he attends meetings with patients and conferences. The Association publishes a quarterly patient magazine and

Michalski has written a series of articles about coping with his disease, living well with dialysis and finally transplantation.

Always thinking of how his experience can help others faced with a similar diagnosis or situation, Michalski's words are personal, motivating and provide emotional support to kidney patients. At various times of the year he can also be found at nephrology conferences where he represents the patient's point of view of living with dialysis.

Committed to maintaining an active lifestyle, Michalski cooperates with the Polish Transplant Sport Association. In 2014 he helped with the organization of the European Transplant & Dialysis Sports Championships in Krakow where he was a volunteer.

In retrospect, dealing with the diagnosis of renal failure and dialysis breathed new vitality into Michalski's life, giving him new research to conduct, new causes to support and new people whose lives he could affect in a positive way. You could say that he lives by the saying "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade."



Rajmund Michalski and his daughter in Krakow as volunteers.

Salad and summer: a perfect pairing

It is no coincidence that salads stand front and centre on the kitchen table come summertime. They are light and easy to digest, feature the best of summer fruits and vegetables, and can be eaten as a meal or served as a side. Join us on a journey through Europe and beyond to discover more about the history of salad and some regional favourites enjoyed today.

At salad's roots

Think salad is a recent trend from a health-conscious era? Think again. Salad, then considered a dish of dressed mixed greens, was frequently enjoyed in ancient Greece and Rome. As time progressed, salads became more complex and began to include a variety of ingredients. During the Renaissance dinner salads became commonplace and by the 18th century composed salads featuring layers of different ingredients were widely popular.

Today salads are broad by definition and the possibilities are seemingly endless. They can contain exclusively fruit and be served at breakfast, brunch or for dessert. Or they can be made of finely chopped vegetables without a leaf of lettuce in sight. Still others use a grain or grain-like ingredients as a basis, such as rice, bulgur or quinoa, and many are made into a meal with the addition of protein in the form of fish, meat, cheese or egg. As the mercury rises and the days grow longer, salads are an excellent dish served alongside anything from the barbecue. Let's have a closer look at some best-loved salads that are perfect for the warm weather.

Panzanella – Italian bread salad

After a taste of panzanella, the rustic Italian bread salad bursting with summer vegetables in their prime, you will never toss out stale bread again. The method itself may come as a surprise: thick slices of leftover Tuscan-style bread are lightly soaked in water before being squeezed to remove any excess moisture and torn into chunks. The pieces are then tossed with vine-ripened tomatoes, onion and possibly cucumber, and lightly dressed with olive oil and vinegar. A garnish of fresh basil leaves on top and panzanella is ready to serve!



Panzanella - simple and delicious.

Where exactly does this funny-sounding salad hail from? Well, some sources credit its origins to Italian writer Boccaccio, who in the 1350s mentioned pan lovato or “washed bread” in one of his works. Others point to Italian poet Bronzino who, a few hundred years later, described a dish consisting of onions, cucumbers and toast with oil and vinegar. More likely than not, Tuscans had been eating versions of panzanella for centuries without written documentation. What we do know for certain: as cited by Bronzino, originally onions and cucumbers were used in panzanella in lieu of tomatoes. The red gems did not arrive in Italy from the New World until the 16th century.

Famously Greek

With its bounty of bright summer vegetables and creamy-tangy feta cheese, tucking in to a Greek salad, known as horiatiki, Greek for “from the village”, gives the perfect note to a summer evening. Easy to make, easy to enjoy: it's no coincidence that horiatiki shows up on the summer menu at nearly every taverna – and on the table at nearly every home.

Unlike many interpretations of Greek salad eaten outside of Greece, authentic ones contain no lettuce or leafy greens whatsoever. In-

stead, summer vegetables, such as tomatoes and cucumber, are cut into generous wedges or slices, placed in a shallow dinner bowl and garnished with sliced onion, black olives and feta cheese. In a genuine Greek salad, it is important for the salad to be crowned with one large piece of feta to signify the cheese's quality. Before serving, high-quality local olive oil and a splash of vinegar are generously drizzled on top.



Greek salad - the well known classic.

From the Iberian coast

With over 7,000 kilometres of coastline along both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, it is no surprise that fish and seafood make a big splash in Spain. Especially during balmy summertime days and nights, Spaniards regularly eat easy-to-assemble salads



featuring the best of the sea as starters. In a typical Spanish seafood salad, shrimp, mussels and octopus might appear alongside the season's best local vegetables, such as sweet peppers, onions and tomatoes, though many families add their own twist with additions such as corn or olives. Feel free to add or subtract ingredients that please or tease your palate, and try adding herbs like fresh mint leaves to give this salad a tasty kick.

Turkish delight

Bulgur, or cracked wheat, is a staple in Turkey where chefs and home cooks alike use it in everything from salads and pilafs to soups



Colourful bulgur salad.

and desserts. So it is only logical that kisir, Turkey's most popular salad, and relative to Middle Eastern tabbouleh, is based on bulgur along with finely chopped vegetables and herbs. There is no one standard recipe for kisir, with ingredients and preparation method varying slightly by region. In contrast to tabbouleh, kisir is always made with concentrated tomato and pepper purees, which creates its quintessential red colour. Kisir is delicious eaten as an afternoon snack with tea, as a meal on boiling summer days or as an accompaniment to kebabs, chicken or other meat served piping hot off the grill. The dish is equally revered for being nutrient-packed and economical. For best-possible taste, make kisir a day before you plan to eat it and let the flavours meddle overnight.

Inspiration from other cuisines

Nearly every country has typical or best-loved salads you can turn to for inspiration in the kitchen this summer. Hungarian potato salad, known locally as meleg krumpisaláta, features potatoes mixed with hard-cooked eggs, spring onions and sour cream, and is served warm. Or there is the common German variety in which cooked mealy potatoes meet a tangy vinegar based dressing. Caesar salad, whose

origins remain disputed, marries crisp romaine lettuce with a unique anchovy-based dressing and is tasty topped with chicken, shrimp or steak. Chicken and pineapple salad in a mayonnaise dressing is popular in Poland while Romanians love using red sweet peppers to make salata de ardei, a salad in which the peppers are fried with their skin on, dressed with oil and served with cubes of local cheese. The possibilities really are endless – and the results always delicious!

Enjoying the Good Food way

Not only are salads fitting to warm temperatures, they can also be an excellent source of vitamins and nutrients. That said, as a kidney patient you must always take care to follow the 5 Good Food Routines. For instance, instead of using salt, chop up some fresh herbs, such as parsley, basil, dill or chives, to add bright layers of flavour to any salad. Then finish off with a dash of vinegar – the red wine and balsamic varieties are especially delicious – and some good-quality olive oil.

Because all fruits and vegetables contain potassium, it is essential to ensure you don't consume too much while enjoying summer salads. This requires slicing and soaking

vegetables and potatoes before cooking, and limiting your fresh fruit intake to one serving per day. Remember that some fruits, such as bananas or dried fruit, are best avoided entirely because of their high potassium content.



One rule of thumb to follow: the more colourful your salad, the wider variety of vitamins and minerals it delivers.

Be cautious, however, with food containing high levels of fat soluble vitamins like Vitamin A as they can build up in your body. Your best bet is to first speak to your nephrologist or dietician about your personal situation and nutritional needs and then start dreaming up all the salad combinations you are going to savour this summer!

Smoothie does it!

The trend-drink long famous in the USA has arrived in Europe: the smoothie! Here are a few ideas and tips to follow so you can enjoy the occasional tasty, frothy drink during the year's sunniest season.

Let's start off with the basics: what is a smoothie anyway and where does its fun-sounding name come from? A smoothie is drink with a thick, smooth milkshake-like consistency. It is made by blending fruit, or even vegetables, along with ice, milk or yogurt and sometimes a sweetener like honey. The result is yummy and refreshing, especially on hot summer days. As bizarre as the name smoothie may sound, especially to non-native English speakers, its origins are simple enough: the name comes from the drink's incredibly smooth mouth-feel.

Dialysis-friendly ingredients

Like with all foods and beverages, dialysis patients should verify that their smoothie follows the good food routines. Among other things, this means sticking to the rules for fruit and vegetables, even if you are consuming them in pureed form. Also remember if you add ice, it counts as a liquid. A recent smoothie trend is so-called green smoothies, which get their green colour from leafy vegetables such as spinach, Swiss chard or kale. However, renal patients must be especially careful because these greens contain high levels of oxalic acid, which can cause kidney stones. It's also important to ensure you make good

fruit choices and that you adhere to the one serving of fresh fruit per day rule. Especially, if you need to closely monitor your potassium intake you should be prudent with fruits like bananas, grapes and kiwi because of their high potassium content.

So what belongs in a dialysis-friendly smoothie? Well, berries such as blueberries, blackberries and raspberries, and stone fruits such as nectarines, peaches or plums are all great choices. Though not a typical smoothie ingredient, apples can add a delicious tart yet slightly sweet note to the blended beverage. Want to go green and add flavour? Instead of spinach or kale, select culinary herbs like mint, basil or hollyhock.

Keep portion size and frequency in check

A little bit of this, a little bit of that: it's easy to get carried away when making a smoothie. But there are a number of reasons why keeping the portion size small is essential. One we already touched on: your health depends on properly monitoring your fruit and vegetables consumption as well as your liquid intake. Making an otherwise good-for-you smoothie but drinking the equivalent of a double serving will put you well over the daily limit, which can

be harmful to your body and your overall well-being. An easy, reliable way of ensuring you don't add excessive amounts of any ingredient is by weighing them on a kitchen scale or using a measuring jug. Also, bear in mind that drinking a smoothie in large quantities can be tough on your digestive system.

As delicious as they are and as healthy as they seem, smoothies should be enjoyed in moderation. This means enjoying one now and again as a snack or when you are on the go, not as a replacement for daily meals. Many people find that while refreshing, a smoothie does not fill them up in the same way as, for instance, an apple or a handful of blueberries



does because of the lack of chewing involved. In contrast, for individuals with conditions like dysphagia, consuming fruit and veg in liquid form can actually help them meet their daily nutritional needs. Your doctor or dietician can give you a clear idea of what is best for your personal situation.

Top tips from smoothie fans

Even if you are a smoothie novice, just a few quick tips and hints is all you need to start blending them up like a pro. First and foremost, you will need a blender. A high-power stand up version is ideal but a hand-held immersion one will also do. If you do not own a blender, ask a friend or neighbour if you can borrow one to try it out before investing in one. Smoothie lovers know that frozen fruit blends up beautifully and offers other advantages: in contrast to seasonal fruits, it is available year-round and you can keep it on hand in the freezer without worrying about spoilage. To keep your portion size in check, serve it in a small glass. Served with or without a straw, your smoothie is sure to be a delight!

Can't wait to start blending? Check out our smoothie recipes created especially for people with chronic kidney disease. Cheers!

From the recipe box: summer delights

Courgettes, watermelons and plums, oh my! Summer's most delicious fruits and vegetables are just waiting for you to enjoy them – for instance in palate-pleasing smoothies and crunchy-crispy salads. Here are a few kidney-friendly recipes showcasing summer's best. Why not make enough to share and ask a friend, relative or neighbour to join you for a summertime treat and some good conversation!

Fruit smoothie

(serves 3)

- 75 g Greek yogurt
- 1 plum
- 1 peach
- 1 nectarine
- 75g blueberries, fresh or frozen

Remove the stones from the plum, peach and nectarine. Cut the fruits into small pieces. Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.



Try other fruits! Why not swap those in the recipe for something else. Try some strawberries or a pear instead! Be creative and start with just a few ingredients, you can add others later. You know best what is available and which fruits you may eat.

Nutritional value per unit:

Energy	85 kcal
Protein	2 g
Fat	3 g
Carbohydrate	13 g
Potassium	245 mg
Phosphor	45 mg
Sodium	16 mg
Liquid	127 ml

Green smoothie

(serves 2)

- 1-2 sweet apples
- 1 handful of wild herbs (e.g. mallow, nettle, sorrel)
- 1 handful of raspberry leaves
- 100-120 ml water depending on desired consistency

Cut the apples into sections and put them and the remaining ingredients into a heavy-duty mixer. Fill with some water and slowly begin to mix, adding a little more water if necessary. Once thoroughly blended, mix for about 30 to 45 seconds at the highest level. Provides about 300 ml of smoothie.



Nutritional value per unit:

Energy	62 kcal
Protein	1 g
Fat	0,3 g
Carbohydrate	13 g
Potassium	198 mg
Phosphor	26 mg
Sodium	6 mg
Liquid	129 ml

Victoria Boutenko is called the mother of green smoothies. Born in Russia and living in the US, she wanted to improve the health of her family - in the early 90s raw food diets were not very common. Also her family was not fond of leafy green vegetables. But then she had the idea of blending everything together to make a drink – and so the green smoothie was born.

Italian Bread Salad

(serves 4)

- 7 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 20 cherry tomatoes
- 1 cucumber
- 1 red onion
- 1 bunch basil
- 300 g ciabatta (bread)
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 40 g pine nuts
- Sugar, salt and pepper



For the dressing mix 3 tablespoons of oil with honey and vinegar. Wash and halve the tomatoes. Peel the cucumber and cut in half lengthwise. Cut the cucumber halves into slices. Pluck off the basil leaves and chop. Peel the onion and cut into thin strips. Put everything in a bowl with the dressing. Cut the bread into bite-sized pieces. Peel the garlic and chop finely. Sauté the bread with garlic, pine nuts and the remaining oil in a pan. Add it all to the cucumber-tomato salad and gently mix. Add salt, pepper and sugar to taste.

This salad of bread and tomatoes originally comes from Tuscany, where it is called Panzanella or Panmolle. Until the 20th century, Panzanella was not based on tomatoes but onions. The 16th Century artist and poet Bronzino wrote about onions with oil and vinegar served with toast - often interpreted as an early description of this salad. Nowadays you can find different varieties of it all over Italy. It is especially popular in the summer.



Nutritional value per unit:

Energy	478 kcal
Protein	10 g
Fat	27 g
Carbohydrate	48 g
Potassium	495 mg
Phosphor	151 mg
Sodium	508 mg
Liquid	198 ml

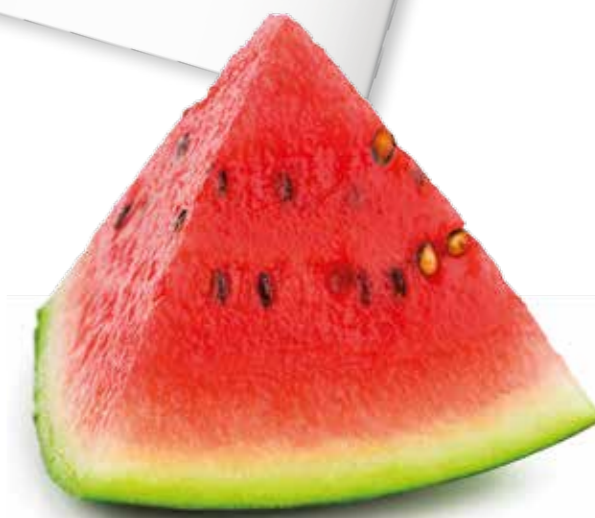
Courgette Salad with Watermelon

(serves 2)

- 1 medium courgette
- 1 apple
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 125 g watermelon without shell
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon white balsamic vinegar
- Salt
- Pepper
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon basil
- 1 tablespoon chives



Cut the courgette into thin elongated strips, coarsely grate the apple. Cover the courgette strips and grated apple immediately with lemon juice. Cut watermelon into thin strips and fold in gently. Mix oil, vinegar and spices to a dressing and toss with the salad.



Nutritional value per unit:

Energy	206 kcal
Protein	3 g
Fat	13 g
Carbohydrate	19 g
Potassium	385 mg
Phosphor	55 mg
Sodium	258 mg
Liquid	220 ml

Did you know that melons, though we trade and eat them as such, are actually not a fruit. They belong to the Cucurbitaceae family, like squash or pumpkin.



Faithful companions: pets and your health

Much more than just man's best friend, a dog – or any other kind of pet – has the power to make life happier and healthier.

Grooming, playing, socialising, or simply cuddling up after a long day: Pet owners have long cherished the joyful moments shared with their pets in daily life. But, as studies have shown, pet owners also reap additional benefits: from reducing the risk of depression and lowering blood pressure to aiding recovery after a heart attack, a furry companion can have positive effects on your health at any age!

Why pets are positive

There's no doubt that with pet ownership comes long-term responsibility. Providing food and shelter, and taking it to the vet for check-ups and when it's ill are just some of the tasks pet owners have to fit into their schedules. Many pets also demand a daily dose of attention, whether it's taking the dog out for a walk or stroking the cat behind its ears.

However, there's a lot of good in all this. The responsibilities that fall on, for instance, a dog owner – feeding it, letting it outside, taking it on walks, grooming it, among other things – create structure and establish a daily routine. And having routines like these can lead to reduced stress levels, which in

turn contributes to lower blood pressure. But that's not all. Simply stroking your dog or cat or being active through playing fetch or taking it for a walk can also reduce stress. Pets also have the ability to calm and soothe, and provide unconditional love and affection – all additional factors that have been shown to reduce stress.

Especially if you live alone or spend a large part of the day by yourself while a spouse or



flatmate is at work, a dog or cat to speak to, interact with and care for provides round-the-clock companionship. A pet can even ease the feeling of loneliness many people in isolated situations experience. How? An animal forces them to assume responsibility and gives their lives a sense of meaning and purpose. With this in mind, it should come as no surprise that the bond created between a master and his or her pet can have the same intensity as a relationship between two humans.

Studies have shown that pet owners are also less likely to suffer from depression. One explanation is the increase in physical exercise. There are no excuses when Fido wants to go out for walks or play fetch in the park. On top of being good for physical health, exercise stimulates the production of mood-boosting, feel-good hormones in your brain such as serotonin and dopamine. These hormones ensure you feel calm and relaxed.

Good for your heart

Studies have shown that pet owners tend to have better overall cardiovascular health due to lower blood pressure, as already mentioned, and decreased levels of cholesterol

and triglycerides. All these factors pay into an individual's heart attack risk, so it's safe to say that pets help keep your heart healthy and strong. Even people who have suffered a heart attack stand to benefit from the company of a cat or a dog. Research shows that heart attack patients with a pet recover better and have better prognoses, probably because a pet helps control or reduce stress.

Easily break the ice

Pets help combat feelings of isolation or loneliness and boost self-confidence by promoting social interaction and helping people establish a social network. When you go out with your dog, or perhaps even with your cat, your four-legged friend serves as a natural icebreaker, wherever you are. People on the street or in stores may stop to stroke your pet and you may find yourself easily making small talk or engaging in pleasant conversation. Over time you may run into the same people time and again, and, who knows, maybe a friendship will blossom.

For dog owners, a guaranteed place to run into like-minded individuals is at the dog park. Just like parents at the playground can always talk with other parents about

child-related topics, it's easy to discuss dog-related topics – breed, name, age, favourite places for walks – with other dog owners. Pet clubs and pet training courses are also excellent ways to meet people while you teach your pet a new trick or two.

A companion for all ages

For a child or teen, having a pet brings great joy to life while also teaching responsibility and accountability from a young age. When accompanied by an adult, younger children can help feed a pet and clean up after meal-times, help with bathing and grooming, and join in for a walk. Older children around aged 10 and above can accomplish many tasks alone, though feeding a dog should always be supervised to ensure it does not nip. If a



pet in your household is out of the question because of existing allergies, space limitations or other reasons, horse-riding is an excellent alternative. A child can be involved in grooming the animal before and after riding, and being in the saddle has many therapeutic benefits of its own. Check with your local equestrian centre to enquire about the possibilities.

Exposure to pets can also foster healthy social and emotional development in children. Caring for a pet demonstrates to children how to care for and be kind to others, lifelong skills that can be challenging to teach at a young age.

Picking a pet

For many, a dog or a cat is the obvious choice. But if you are neither a dog-person nor a cat-person, why not explore other options? A hamster, a bird or even fish: select the one that's best for your personal situation and will bring you the most joy every day. If you are uncertain, take time to find out about different kinds of pets and the responsibilities and time commitment demanded on the owner. Ask at a pet store, research online or check out a book on the subject at the local library. Current pet owners can also be good resources, so ask around your neighbourhood or visit the park for an afternoon and speak to the people there about their animals.

A pet can truly bring so much good to your life by boosting your overall health and happiness.



Your perfect companion Thinking about bringing a new animal into your home? Here's a brief overview of common pets and who they fit best.



Cat: These creatures are wonderful, playful pets and great cuddlers but they tend to have an independent streak, especially compared to dogs.



Hamster: These on-the-go rodents are perfect for people with limited space. But be forewarned: they tend to be more active at night than during the day.



Dog: Generally speaking, dogs are a bigger time commitment than other pets. That said, they give loads in return. Lap dogs are good choices for people seeking a smaller animal.



Bird: A cheerful, chirpy bird can make a delightful pet. Select a tame and gentle variety and the whole family can enjoy its company. Many birds, however, are messy and the cage requires frequent cleaning.



Fish: Low maintenance, but promising in terms of entertainment, fish are ideal for those who want a pet requiring minimal effort. Food and a clean aquarium will keep them happy.



Rabbit: In case you have not heard, rabbits can learn to use the litter box, giving them the green light for romping about indoors. Sweet, responsive, and content with just a few essentials, rabbits are all-around easy pets.

Inspiration from unexpected places

In line with our animal and pets theme, this issue we bring you a special story from Romanian dialysis patient, Florin Lacatusu. A man with a funny and surprising story to tell about goals, living in happiness and learning from others.



I am a man in my forties with aspirations and ideals like anyone else from my generation. But my life is different from other people's lives in one major way: I go to dialysis three times a week. As someone with a chronic condition, I am always searching for things that bring me pleasure. Life, I have learned, is precious and I genuinely treasure every happy moment. But above all, I am a very determined person with

goals that I strive to reach, however challenging the way there might be.

Nowadays it's trendy to talk about goals. How to set them and what to do to cross the finish line. Some people even participate in training classes about personal development, read intensively about the topic or ask a specialist for advice. Well, my fellow patients, I person-



ally know the world's best coach when it comes to turning dreams into reality. Her name is Pisi and she is a very motivated... cat. At a young age, she achieved all she set out in life to accomplish: she found a warm place to live, tasty food to eat and somebody to love her. Pisi and I met several years ago and through the course of our friendship, I have often reflected on how much she has taught me about reaching my goals. Yes, dear friends, I have learned an awful lot from my cat.

Once upon a time, on a summer's day with dismal autumn-like weather, I was walking home with my mind adrift. Suddenly right in front of me was a dirty snowball, with big bright eyes that were staring me down. Oh no, I thought, what a poor creature. Then it started conversing with me. 'Meow.' A short pause. 'Meow', it said again.

Have you ever seen a snowball meowing in the middle of summer? I bet not. Alas, it was a little female kitten, dirty and skinny, but on the prowl and looking to socialise. She was not afraid of me and, unlike any ordinary cat she did not run away when I approached.



'What do you want?' I asked, sincerely. 'Meow', was her immediate response. Was it food she was after, I wondered. No, she was not hungry; it was something else. Unsure of what to do, I glanced again in her direction. She looked very determined and now I could see that she was in pain. Which brings us to the first lesson I learnt from my soon-to-be new friend: Communicate and ask for help when you need it.

As soon as I understood her needs, I realised it would be a shame to leave her there. So I was left with no choice but to take her home with me. First order of business for my new, incredibly filthy housemate: a nice warm bath.

And because bathing notoriously makes you hungry, I followed up by offering the kitten a bowl of warm milk. After licking up the last drop, she fell asleep in my arms and started to purr. She knew just the right trick to tug at my emotions.

But what am I going to do with her was the next logical question. As it was raining I decided she could stay for the night. But tomorrow, I will let her out. Keep the cat? No way. I do not need or want a pet, I firmly reminded myself. An animal like that would only add messy tassels to my curtains while gleefully sharpening her claws. She would also decorate the sofa with her fur and perfume the house with that typical feline smell. No, thank you, no cat. We both fell into a deep slumber and before long morning came. When she woke up, she looked up at me and all I could see was love in her eyes. She washed herself, stretched her agile limbs and then ran to the fridge where she stood still, like a guard at an important ceremony. Our fate was obvious: this was her new home and I had to keep her. I shared the good news with her, which she accepted with a purr. Then I promptly named her Pisi.

Like any honeymoon period, the first few months together were enjoyable, but whenever her teeth and claws emerged her mood also changed. She was very naughty and my beloved sofa became unusable. There was no way a wild cat like Pisi could stay inside all day, so I decided to take her out and feed her there. In the garden she could play, pounce and chase mice, or whatever else cats do,

while also being protected from stray dogs. But after just half a day outdoors the newly spoilt cat realised she preferred the warmth and comfort of indoors.



The following days were a nightmare for her – and for me – as we tried to find a way to live together in harmony. I insisted she try to acclimatise to the great outdoors. Pisi insisted she wanted to stay inside, which she showed me by gluing herself to the rug at the entrance door. So after giving her a speech about being respectful of my belongings and watching her moodiness, I gave her a second chance. Low and behold, this time she actually behaved. Here I learnt my second lesson: do not give up. If at first you don't succeed, try over and over again. This situation taught me lesson number three as well: follow the rules of the house you live in if you want a good life.

Today Pisi is a fully-grown cat and we have shared so many wonderful moments. Everybody in the family loves her. She has taught me to be bold and persistent as well as



respectful and brave. She has also taught me the importance of loving those around me. I learnt that I alone am in charge of my attitude, my actions and reaching my personal goals.

Even with chronic illness, my life and my happiness are in my hands. As Walt Disney famously said, "All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them".

Crazy about cats!

We just learned how cats can serve as mentors and motivators, as exemplified in Florin Lacatusu's story. Here is some additional fun trivia about cats and cat lovers.

When the cat's away, the mice will play:

Nearly every language has its own stock of cat-related sayings but this classic one is the only expression, sometimes with subtle differences, found in nearly every European language. Its meaning is when the person in charge of a situation is gone, others behave in ways they shouldn't.

A saltwater solution: Did you know cats can drink saltwater to stay hydrated? Remarkably, their kidneys are efficient enough to remove the salt, a trait that helps felines survive in the wild in times of drought.

Territorial: Cats mark their territory with their ... paws! They have scent glands that leave a trail wherever the furry felines go.

Famous words: Longtime cat owner and writer Charles Dickens once said "What greater gift than the love of a cat."

Cats and their naps: If you picture cats lounging around sleeping a good part of the day, you're spot on. Cats sleep around 16 hours a day, or 70% of their lives!



Fit and active this summer

With birds and wildlife humming about, flowers in full bloom, and the sun giving off plenty of warm rays, summer is the ideal time to head outdoors and be active. Not only is exercise a key part of living a fulfilling life as a dialysis patient, it can be a lot of fun, too!



The right start

First and foremost, before starting any exercise regime, speak to your physician. He or she is familiar with your medical history and needs, and can help identify which exercise options are best for you. While all dialysis patients are encouraged to be active, lighter forms of exercise – such as biking, walking and swimming – are better choices than high-performance sports, which can place too much strain on the body.



Studies have shown that regularity is key to reaping the full benefits of exercise. Your mind and body will feel better, and you'll have more energy overall if exercise is part of your weekly routine. Many dialysis patients report feeling less anxious or depressed when they exercise, making improved mental health a further huge added benefit. As your muscles grow stronger and you gain more flexibility in your joints, you'll also find that daily activities and tasks are easier and more enjoyable. Let the goal of good health and improved quality of life serve as your motivation to exercise more – starting this summer!

Keep your fluid intake in check

Because you sweat more, exercise can make you thirsty. But as a dialysis patient it is essential for you to pay careful attention to the fluids you consume. Before altering the amount of fluids you drink, discuss this topic with your NephroCare team or your dietician. They can give you sound advice on what is best for you!

Go out, get moving!

Swimming, hiking, cycling, yoga: whatever your pick, exercise is both good for your body and loads of fun, especially under the shining sun and endless blue sky. Here is a closer look at summer-suitable activities, along with their benefits and a few good-to-know facts. A low-impact, highly-effective sport, swimming is an especially good form of exercise all year round. It is gentle on your joints and bones, and gives you a full-body workout. Put a summertime spin on your swimming routine by swimming at an outdoor pool, in the sea or a nearby lake.



If you enjoy the water but find swimming monotonous or simply prefer a class with an instructor, water gymnastics is a wonderful alternative. It offers many of the same physical benefits as swimming, with the added advantages of professional guidance and some social interaction. Check with your community outdoor pool to find out the summer schedule for drop-in water gymnastics courses and lap swimming. A few to dos before diving in: ensure you have a swimming costume you can move or swim in and take along sun cream!

Hiking or walking is likewise made for pleasant summer days. What is not to love about being outdoors, enjoying beautiful scenery, and doing something good for your body and mind? Select a low-intensity hiking path, perhaps in a nearby forest or park, or along the banks of a river or lake. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes with sufficient support and weather-appropriate clothes, including an extra layer to put on or take off. Consider packing a delicious and nutritious picnic to savour along the way!

A low-impact activity that uses all the major muscle groups, it is no wonder cyclists



abound whenever the sun comes out. What is more, cycling is suitable for young and old, and lets you take in warm temperatures and nature's beauty while doing something beneficial for your health. If you work and there are adequate cycling paths, why not make cycling part of your daily commute? By cycling over driving, you do something good for your health, your wallet and the environment. Even longer stretches by bicycle are possible, as we hear in Spanish patient and avid cyclist Ricardo García Sala's personal story about cycling and dialysis on pages 22-25.

Downward dog, warrior, and tree. What are we talking about? If you guessed yoga poses, you are right! Yoga, as well as Pilates, gently works on improving strength and flexibility, and are easily customised to your individual needs and fitness goals. If you have yet to try these popular fitness activities, there is no better time than now: both can be done outdoors in the summer! Check with a local community centre for an overview of yoga or Pilates groups in your area.

For the competitive-minded

Did you know there is a pan-European sports games exclusively for transplant and dialysis

patients? The European Transplant & Dialysis Games, held biennially in a selected host country, give transplant and dialysis patients a stage for showing off their athletic talents. Participants compete in everything from cycling and volleyball, to bowling and table tennis, while enjoying a week of camaraderie with other sport-minded dialysis or transplant patients. Interested? Speak first with your physician and ask your local renal patient association.

Group benefits

Many summertime activities – especially cycling, walking and hiking – are best done in the company of others. This means you have the luxury of accomplishing two things at



once: taking care of your body and socialising with friends or perhaps making new ones. What is more, exercising with a partner or group can help you stick to a regular routine because you hold each other accountable. All the more reason to phone a friend!

Maybe you've seen or know of people in your neighbourhood or community who regularly go on walks or cycling tours together. Why not join in? Or simply take the initiative and create your own group with friends or neighbours. Another idea: While at your local NephroCare centre for dialysis, ask other patients if they are interested in participating in a weekly hiking or cycling group.

Good for your body

We've already touched on some of the benefits of exercise – lower blood pressure, better blood sugar levels, and improved mood, among others – and the list goes on and on. People who get regular exercise maintain their weight better and prevent excess weight gain. When done on a regular basis, physical activity can reduce your risk of a variety of health issues, ranging from stroke and diabetes to cardiovascular disease and more, by keeping your blood sugar and blood fat levels in bal-

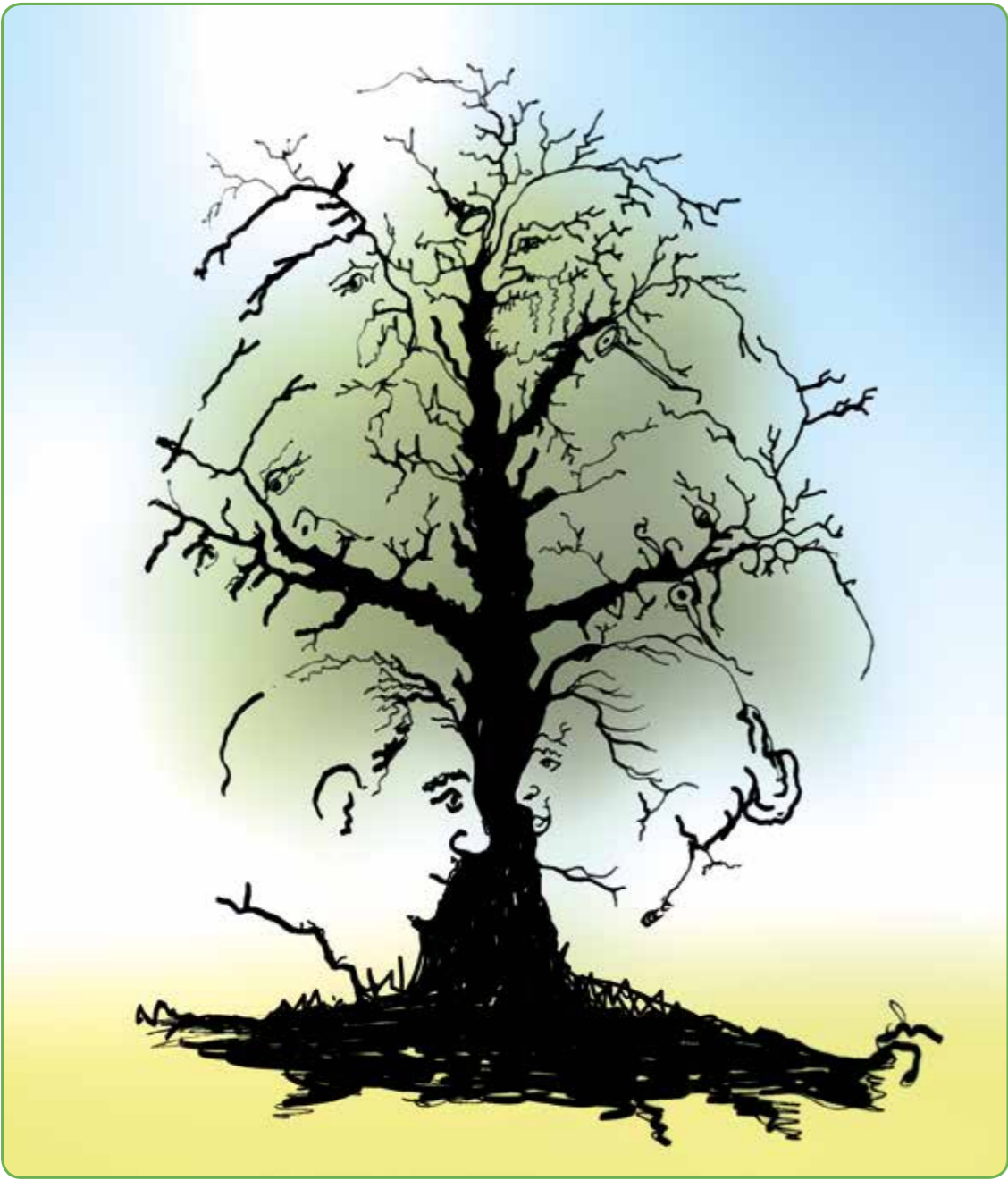


ance, among other things. Long-term, regular exercise can even strengthen your immune system so you are less prone to illnesses. Contrary to popular belief, exercise actually boosts your energy and can help you sleep better, which makes everyday life more enjoyable.

So make it your priority for the summer of 2015 to be your healthiest and happiest by making regular exercise your new healthy habit. Remember to begin slow and steady, after discussing an appropriate fitness regimen with your physician. You can do it!

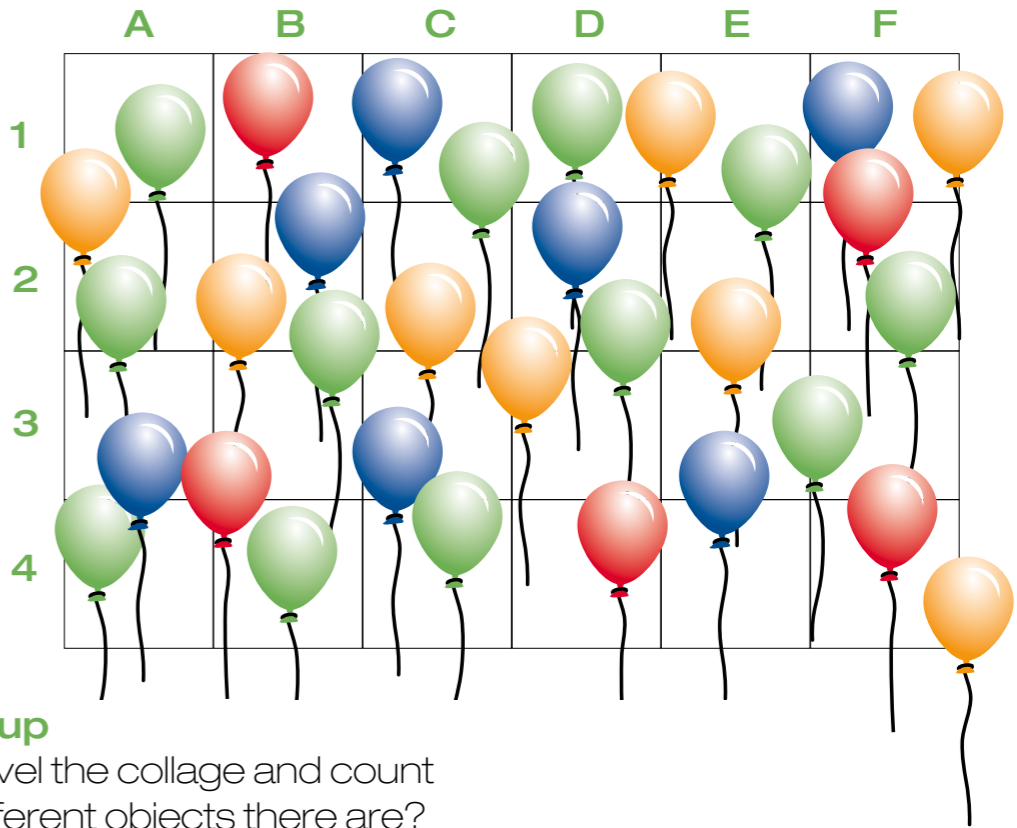
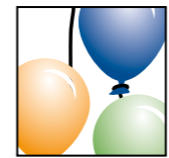
Brain calisthenics

How many faces can you find in this picture?



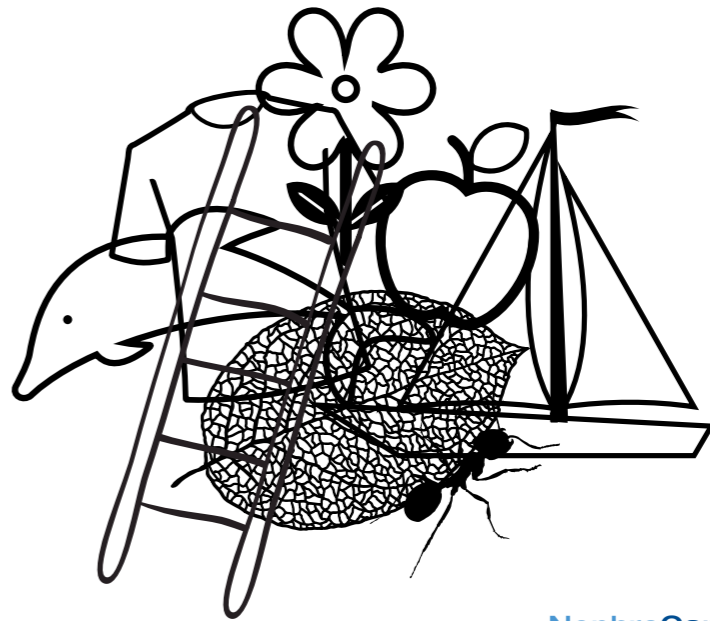
Look and find

Can you find this section of the picture on the original grid ?



All jumbled up

Can you unravel the collage and count how many different objects there are?



Announcements

Every day is a new day to be celebrated in many ways!

On this note, here are some special announcements for the birthdays and anniversaries of friends and loved ones. If you have a special announcement you would like to make, please get in touch with us.



This template allows you to make individual announcements in your country.

The examples shown here are placeholders.

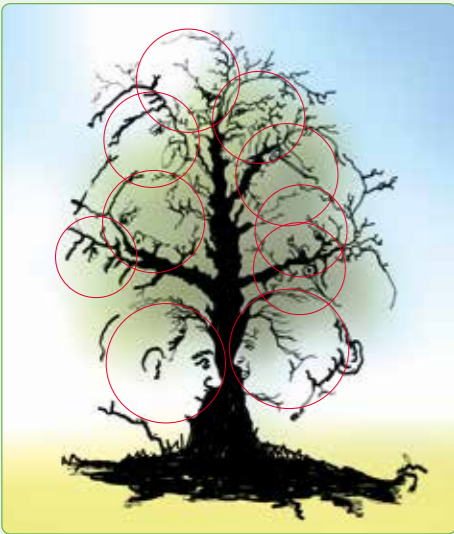
XXth birthday celebrations!

On May 16th, Luise Murphy will celebrate a very special birthday indeed. It will be her 100th! We would like to take this opportunity to send her our congratulations for her birthday and to wish her all the best as a newly crowned centenarian!



Brain calisthenics solutions

10 faces



Look and find

B 2

All jumbled up

- Dolphin
- Ladder
- Shirt
- Flower
- Apple
- Boat
- Leaf
- Ant

Your opinion counts...

What do you think of NephroCare for me?

We want to continuously improve this magazine to match your interests. Please take two minutes of your time and give us your feedback.

	Read		Evaluation			
	YES	NO	I liked it very much... not at all			
News from around the world						
Holidays by the sea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enhanced resources for patients on NephroCare website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worth knowing in renal						
Diabetic foot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Different countries – different habits						
One hundred candles: celebrating a very special birthday!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
La dolce vita – life the Italian way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special interview: Nothing comes between Ricardo & sport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spotlight on: A scientist's mind on dialysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Here's to your health						
Salad and summer: a perfect pairing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smoothie does it!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From the recipe box: summer delights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worth living						
Faithful companions: pets and your health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspiration from unexpected places	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fit and active this summer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspiring						
Brain calisthenics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Announcements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Questionnaire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



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