

January 2026



Newsletter

Happy New Year!

New Year Goals outside of Dialysis

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

New Year Goals for Dialysis

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



A Review of Safety Measures for the New Year

Happy New Year!

The beginning of a new year is traditionally a time to reflect on the old and plan for the new. This month's article will reflect on winter preparedness and the steps we need to take to be #WinterReady in the new year. Being #WinterReady means understanding the risks winter weather may bring with (1) house fires caused by heating units, (2) power outages, and (3) challenges with travel during the winter months. Let's review a little winter readiness on each topic.

Preventing House Fires

House fires caused by heating units remain an ongoing concern. It is important to follow these tips to reduce the risk of a house fire during the winter months.

- * Keep anything that can burn (paper & paper items (books, magazines, newspapers, etc.), clothing (laundry, blankets, pillows, etc.), toys, to name a few, at least 3 feet from heating sources like [fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators, furnace outlets, space heaters](#), and candles.
- * Always check cords before using them to make sure they are intact and not damaged or frayed. It is best to plug space heaters directly into an outlet versus using an extension cord.
- * Never use the stove or an oven to heat your home.
- * Inspect heating equipment in the home each year to make sure they are operating appropriately. This includes fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators, furnace outlets, space heaters, etc.
- * Refer to the U.S. Fire Administration's website for more information on preventing house fires. The website is: <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/home-fires/>

Preparing for Power Outages

There is always a risk of experiencing power outages during wintery weather. Power outages can disrupt the ability to communicate with others, affect utilities like lights, heaters, electronic equipment, transportation (buses, taxi, uber, etc.), banks and ATMs, use of electrically powered medical devices, gas stations, grocery stores, etc. It is important to plan ahead when winter storms are predicted and alerts are made. Here are tips to consider when a power outage happens.

- * Keep the doors to freezers and refrigerators closed to conserve the coldness. Throw away refrigerated foods that have been exposed to 40 degrees or higher for 2 hours or more, have an unusual odor, color, and/or texture.
- * Make alternate plans for refrigerating medications.
- * Disconnect all electrical appliances and electronics to avoid damage from electrical surges when the power comes back on.
- * Do not use a gas stove or oven to heat your home (think fire safety).
- * Use a generator outdoors only and away from windows.
- * Make alternate plans for power-dependent medical devices.
- * Go to a community center with power if cold temperatures are extreme and you cannot heat your home.

A Review of Safety Measures for the New Year

Safety Tips for Winter Travel

The new year may bring opportunities for travel near and far. If travel is in your future, here are safety tips to consider, especially when travelling by car.

Know before you go

- * Make sure your car is in good working condition before leaving.
- * Restock the emergency supply kit in your car. Throw out expired items and replace with new ones. Safety supplies include jumper cables, flares/reflective triangles, flashlights, ice scrapers, cell phone chargers, blankets, warm coats, hats, gloves/mittens, hard copy maps, and cat litter or sand for traction.
- * Be aware of winter weather forecasts at home, your destination, and places along the way by checking local weather and travel reports before leaving. Read the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Winter Weather Driving Tips before leaving. <https://www.nhtsa.gov/winter-driving-tips>
- * The National Weather Service provides up-to-date weather forecasts across the country. There are maps to visualize any potential winter weather along your route and active weather alert announcements you may find helpful when planning your trip, before leaving, during your trip, and before leaving for home.
<https://www.weather.gov/>
- * If the roads are affected by winter weather, consider postponing non-essential travel until the roads are cleared. If you need to travel, make sure you are prepared in case you get stranded.
- * Let your family or friends know when you leave and keep them updated of where you are while traveling.

While on the road

- * Make sure your car is in good working order while you are traveling.
- * Keep the gas tank full while traveling. Stop and fill the tank before it gets near empty. Keeping the tank full helps to keep the fuel line from freezing.
- * Have a reliable set of tires on your car with good tread. Take tire chains with you if required.
- * Increase the traveling distance between the car(s) in front of you. It takes longer to stop on icy, snowy roads.
- * If stranded, then run the car and heater for about 10 minutes each hour and charge your cell phone. Always open the window slightly when doing this to reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

As we enter into a new year, it is good to be reminded of wintery weather tips to start the year off safely!

References:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (no date): Winter Weather Driving Tips. <https://www.nhtsa.gov/winter-driving-tips>

National Weather Service (current date): weather.gov/safety. <https://www.weather.gov/>

Ready Check. Ready.gov (no date): Why You Should Be #WinterReady. <https://www.ready.gov/winter-ready#fires>

U.S. Fire Administration (2023, April 1): Working for a Fire Safe America. <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/home-fires/>

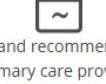
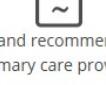
Your Guide to Health Screenings by Age

Whatever your age or stage of life, prevention is the best medicine. Health screenings are important for detecting and preventing diseases and managing risk factors.

Women

Age	Frequency	Screening	
 20s and 30s	 Once a month	Breast self-exam Self-check skin cancer screening	
	 Once a year	Blood pressure screening Height, weight, body mass index (BMI) Breast self-exam Cardiovascular evaluation Comprehensive physical exam Depression screening	
	 Every 2 to 5 years as recommended by your primary care provider		Blood sugar test Eye exam Human papilloma virus (HPV) test Pap test
	 As needed and recommended by your primary care provider	 Every 5 years	Cholesterol check
	 All of the above screenings, plus the following:	 Once a year	Sexually transmitted diseases (STD) tests
 40s	 Once a year	Mammogram Full-body skin exams	
	 Every 2 - 5 years as recommended by your primary care provider		Cholesterol check
	 Every 10 years		Colon cancer screening
 50s	 All of the above screenings, plus the following:	 Every 5 years	Bone density test Thyroid panel
	 Every 10 years		Cardiac calcium scoring Hearing test
	 As needed and recommended by your primary care provider		Low-dose lung CT scan
 60s	 All of the above screenings, plus the following:	 Once a year	Dementia and Alzheimer's screening

Men

Age	Frequency	Screening
 20s and 30s	 Once a month	Self-check skin cancer screening Testicular self-exam
	 Once a year	Blood pressure screening Height, weight, body mass index (BMI) Cardiovascular evaluation Comprehensive physical exam Depression screening Testicular cancer screening
	 Every 2 – 5 years as recommended by your primary care provider	Blood sugar test Eye exam
	 Every 5 years	Cholesterol check
	 As needed and recommended by your primary care provider	Fertility testing Sexually transmitted diseases (STD) tests
 40s	<i>All of the above screenings, plus the following:</i>	
	 Once a year	Full-body skin exam
	 Every 2 – 5 years as recommended by your primary care provider	Cholesterol check
	 Every 10 years	Colon cancer screening
 50s	<i>All of the above screenings, plus the following:</i>	
	 Once a year	Cholesterol check
	 Every 10 years	Cardiac calcium scoring Hearing test
	 As needed and recommended by your primary care provider	Bone density test Low-dose lung CT scan Prostate specific antigen (PSA) screening
 60s	<i>All of the above screenings, plus the following:</i>	
	 Once a year	Dementia and Alzheimer's screening
	 As needed and recommended by your primary care provider	Abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA)

Please note these are screening recommendations are a baseline and certain medical conditions and health risks might require additional screenings. Talk to your healthcare provider.

How Sleep Affects Nutrition and Why It Matters

Sleep and nutrition share a powerful, two-way relationship. Poor sleep can disrupt appetite regulation, alter food choices, and impair metabolism, while a nutrient-poor diet can negatively affect sleep quality. Understanding this connection is key to improving overall health.

Hormonal Control of Appetite

- **Ghrelin (hunger hormone)** rises when sleep is restricted, while **leptin (satiety hormone)** falls—leading to increased hunger and reduced fullness.
- Sleep loss also impacts insulin sensitivity and other appetite-regulating hormones, increasing the risk of overeating.



Cravings & Food Choices

- Sleep deprivation triggers cravings for high-calorie, sugary, and fatty foods due to hormonal imbalances and heightened brain reward responses.
- Elevated cortisol from poor sleep amplifies stress-related eating behaviors.



Metabolic Consequences

- Short sleep duration is linked to glucose intolerance, higher blood pressure, and increased triglycerides.
- Chronic poor sleep promotes insulin resistance and weight gain, creating a cycle of metabolic dysfunction.



Meal Timing & Circadian Rhythms

- Eating late at night or skipping breakfast disrupts circadian alignment, worsening both sleep and metabolic health.
- Consistent meal timing—especially earlier in the day—supports better sleep and energy balance.



Diet Quality & Sleep

- Diets rich in fiber, lean protein, healthy fats, and micronutrients (magnesium, B vitamins) improve sleep quality.
- High sugar and saturated fat intake correlate with lighter, less restorative sleep.

How Sleep Affects Nutrition and Why It Matters

Tips for Better Sleep Hygiene

- 1. Stick to a Consistent Sleep Schedule** Go to bed and wake up at the same time daily—even on weekends.
- 2. Create a Relaxing Pre-Sleep Routine** Try reading, gentle stretching, or meditation. Avoid screens 30–60 minutes before bed.
- 3. Optimize Your Sleep Environment** Keep your bedroom cool, dark, and quiet. Use blackout curtains or white noise if needed.
- 4. Limit Stimulants and Heavy Meals** Avoid caffeine and nicotine in the evening, and skip large meals close to bedtime.
- 5. Get Daylight Exposure & Exercise** Natural light and regular physical activity help regulate sleep cycles. Avoid intense workouts right before bed.
- 6. Manage Stress** Practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing or journaling to reduce nighttime anxiety.
- 7. Use Your Bed for Sleep Only** Avoid working or watching TV in bed to strengthen the mental link between bed and sleep.

Takeaway

Prioritizing **7–9 hours of quality sleep**, eating nutrient-dense meals earlier in the day, and maintaining consistent routines can significantly improve both sleep and nutrition. Together, they form the foundation for better metabolic health, appetite control, and overall well-being. Please talk with your registered dietitian if you have any other questions about how to help improve your sleep and nutrition!



Please remember to bring in your **insurance cards** this month for your AA to make a copy. Even if it hasn't changed in years or the last 3 months we still need it. We will need all insurance cards copied by the end of **January**! Thank you!

Traveling... remember to put your request in 3-4 weeks in advance to give us enough time to find placement. Placement is not always guaranteed. Call **402.489.5339** for questions and to get started on your travel plans!!

