



The Kidney Corner:

Blood draws from veins in the hands

By Dr. Mark Saddler
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"I have chronic kidney disease. Why does my doctor tell me to get my blood tests from a vein in my hand rather than from my arm?"

Managing chronic kidney disease unfortunately requires frequent blood tests. Since kidney function can worsen without any symptoms, it is important to check kidney function by blood testing frequently. It is also important to do blood tests intermittently for complications of CKD (for example, anemia, bone disease or acid buildup).

Generally, patients with CKD are advised to get their blood drawn from the veins in their hands rather than from the arms. This is not always popular advice, because some people feel that the hands are more sensitive to needle sticks. Also, if the blood draw leaves an unfortunate bruise, it is more visible in the hands than the arms.

However, it is still an important piece of advice in order to preserve the arm veins.

One problem with CKD is the tendency for the kidney function to worsen over time. Even people with healthy kidneys are at risk of inexorably losing kidney function, slowly but sure-



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ly, over the years.

When the kidneys are diseased, this process proceeds more quickly. Medications can slow down the process of kidney function loss, but generally cannot stop it.

As physicians, our primary goal is to keep kidneys function-

ing as well as possible to avoid dialysis. But we also need to be conscious of the possibility that any patient with CKD may progress to needing dialysis at some point in their life.

The more commonly used type of dialysis, hemodialysis, is performed by creating a fistula in the arm by connecting an artery to a vein. After this connection is made, the vein needs to enlarge for the fistula to be useable for dialysis.

An experienced surgeon should do the fistula procedure for the best chance of success. But even in the best hands, a fistula may fail to develop if the veins are not of good quality. Repeated blood draws from the veins of the arms can lead to scarring and may prevent the veins from being able to develop into a good fistula.

Choosing one arm only for blood draws can help with vein preservation — the other arm could potentially be used for a future fistula procedure. However, it is sometimes difficult to predict which arm will be more suitable for a future fistula, and it's best to preserve both arms' veins if possible.

If your doctor advises you to have blood draws from the hand only, try to follow this advice if possible. The added inconvenience may be worth it in the long term.

SunUte Community Center

Holiday Closure
Easter Sunday, April 8

The SunUte Community Center will be closed Easter Sunday. SunUte will re-open regular hours on Monday, April 9th at 6:00 a.m. We apologize for the inconvenience.

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For more information, please call us at 970-563-0214. Or visit our website at WWW.SUNUTE.COM
P.O. Box 737 290 Mouache Circle Ignacio, Colo 81137

The Southern Ute Environmental Programs is offering free home radon testing to Tribal members. Please call Peter Dietrich for more information or to schedule an appointment. Priority to Elders and those with infants in their homes.

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Easter Egg Hunt

10 AM Saturday, April 7
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563-0246 x3301
Southern Ute Police Dept

SunUte Community Center

Senior Breakfast Program
Welcoming all Elder's 55+
April's Menu:

April 6: Tropical Fruit Salad
April 13: Apple Banana Oatmeal
April 20: Beach Boy Omelet
***April 27: No Senior Breakfast**

Served with coffee and fruit

Healthy breakfast served every Friday from 9:00am to 10:30am at the SunUte Community Center

\$4.00/SunUte Guest Fee. Free for SUIT members & SunUte members.

SunUte Community Center
Call Us at 970-563-0214 for more information
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Instructors: Don Tolson
Phone: 970-563-0246 x3301
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