

DaVita Kidney Care Dietitians and Social Workers Celebrated for Distinctive Roles in Patient Care

DENVER, March 30, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- [DaVita Kidney Care](#), a division of DaVita HealthCare Partners Inc. (NYSE: DVA) and a leading provider of kidney care services, is celebrating its more than 3,600 dietitians and social workers during March for their distinctive and important roles in patient care.

March is National Kidney Month and also marks both National Nutrition Month and National Social Work Month.

"Our dietitians and social workers engage, empower and support our patients to help build an environment where we can provide the best clinical outcomes in the industry," said Debbie Benner, registered dietitian and vice president for DaVita Kidney Care. "DaVita is a clinical leader in the new CMS Five Star Rating System and these teammates helped us get there. They continue to help guide our patients through their journeys with kidney disease."

In honor of National Social Work Month, DaVita Kidney Care social workers are celebrating the launch of the Empowering Patients Program. This program is designed to enhance social workers' skill set to further help improve patients' quality of life through behavioral activation, mindfulness and coping skills.

For National Nutrition Month, DaVita Kidney Care dietitians are hosting community education events across the nation to celebrate and encourage healthy eating. Dietitians from Houston provide nine tips for a healthy diet:

Food is not the enemy

Food is actually the body's greatest friend. Use it to your advantage. If you're watching your weight, enjoy breakfast like a king, eat lunch like a prince and have dinner like a pauper to help reach weight goals. Eating five to six small meals per day helps boost your metabolism, which slows down when your body goes too long without food.

Start at the grocery store

When you go to the grocery store, shop the perimeter. This is where the freshest and least processed foods are, including fruits, vegetables, meats, eggs and dairy. The center aisles often carry most of the prepackaged, processed foods.

Slow down

Get in the habit of reading food labels and pay attention to serving sizes detailed on the label compared to what you normally eat. Get back to basics with more home/slow-cooked foods versus fast food fare.

"Healthy and Nutritious" does not mean "Restrictions and Limitations"

Consistency and moderation is key – don't exclude any particular food group. Variety is the spice of life. Contrary to popular belief, carbohydrates are safe to eat and eating healthfully does not have to be boring.

Make it colorful

Make your plate a rainbow of color. Choose a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains and protein sources at each meal. Dietitians call this the "plate method." It can work at home or on-the-go to help maintain a heart-healthy, portion-controlled meal plan for any lifestyle. And don't stress out about that cookie or piece of cake. It's OK to fit in a dessert occasionally in a healthy diet.

Protein, protein, protein

If you need more energy in the morning, try adding protein to your breakfast. A good source of protein at all meals helps maintain fullness during the day. Try low-fat yogurt, high fiber cereal and fruit for breakfast. Another healthy choice is plant-based proteins such as lentils and quinoa which are low-fat and high in fiber.

Drink water

Remember that your diet doesn't just consist of food. Sodas, coffee, sports drinks and other sweetened beverages can add a lot of calories to your daily total. And you might want to limit artificially sweetened beverages. They may have only a few calories, but their sweet taste can entice you to eat other less nutritious foods. Water is a better option.

Get educated

Consult a physician or other health care professional like a registered dietitian before making any changes to your diet. Licensed health professionals can help tailor a plan to meet your nutritional needs. Local Kidney Smart classes can also provide helpful information for kidney diet and nutrition. Find a class near you at [DaVita.com/KSClass](http://DaVita.com/KSCClass).

Specialty diets

For those with chronic illnesses – kidney disease, diabetes, heart disease, etc. – diet and nutrition can play an important part in slowing down the progression of disease.

For quick and easy kidney-friendly recipes, download DaVita Kidney Care's new cookbook, Today's Kidney Diet: Healthy Kidney-Friendly Meals in 30 Minutes or Less at DaVita.com/Cookbook.

About DaVita Kidney Care

DaVita Kidney Care is a division of DaVita HealthCare Partners Inc., a Fortune 500(r) company that, through its operating divisions, provides a variety of health care services to patient populations throughout the United States and abroad. A leading provider of dialysis services in the United States, DaVita Kidney Care treats patients with chronic kidney failure and end stage renal disease. DaVita Kidney Care strives to improve patients' quality of life by innovating clinical care, and by offering integrated treatment plans, personalized care teams and convenient health-management services. As of Dec. 31, 2014, DaVita Kidney Care operated or provided administrative services at 2,179 outpatient dialysis centers located in the United States serving approximately 173,000 patients. The company also operated 91 outpatient dialysis centers located in 10 countries outside the United States. DaVita Kidney Care supports numerous programs dedicated to creating positive, sustainable change in communities around the world. The company's leadership development initiatives and social responsibility efforts have been recognized by Fortune, Modern Healthcare, Newsweek and WorldBlu. For more information, please visit DaVita.com.

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