



## Kidney diet just got easier: free online tool lends a hand in the kitchen

Ottawa – Nov. 28, 2011 – For people living with kidney disease, managing their diet feels like a full-time job. Today help arrived with [www.kidneycommunitykitchen.ca](http://www.kidneycommunitykitchen.ca). The Kidney Foundation of Canada launched a new online space called the Kidney Community Kitchen, designed specifically to reduce the burden of coping with kidney disease diets.

“The Kidney Community Kitchen is simply the best online tool I’ve used for managing the kidney diet,” said Patricia Treusch, who donated one of her kidneys to her 17-year-old son in 2007. “It meets the needs of those dealing with kidney disease and dialysis on so many levels. The first thing that comes to mind for me is the improved quality of life. It will help bring back the joy of healthy eating and sharing a meal, which is always important, but especially so during the holidays.”

For people living with kidney disease, managing a kidney diet is highly time-consuming, and both mentally and physically exhausting, particularly if the person on the diet is also undergoing life-sustaining dialysis treatments several times a week. The list of what a person can’t eat often seems longer than what he or she can have. To maintain kidney function, people with kidney disease need to know the quantities of some key nutrients that are not always listed on the nutrition table, such as potassium and phosphorus. They also need to keep track of these nutrients, along with protein and sodium. As a result, grocery shopping, label reading and nutrient tallying seem to be a full-time job. This can be onerous, sap the enjoyment from eating, and contribute to poor health management.

Free and easy to use, [www.kidneycommunitykitchen.ca](http://www.kidneycommunitykitchen.ca) provides a way to plan meals and track intake of critical nutrients. Some of its features include:

- Dietitian-approved and kidney-friendly recipes
- Drag-and-drop meal planner that tracks vital nutrients
- Drag-and-drop, ready-to-go weekly meal plans created by dietitians
- The ability to submit your recipes to be added and reviewed by dietitians
- A way to ask nutritional questions of qualified dietitians
- Forums for sharing stories, ideas and favourite recipes
- Diabetic exchange amounts—good for people monitoring diabetic and renal diets
- Tips, FAQs and other nutritional info about the kidney diet

More than 60 volunteers contributed hundreds of hours to the project through design consultations, recipe review, recipe testing and user testing. “Bilingual and ad-free, [www.kidneycommunitykitchen.ca](http://www.kidneycommunitykitchen.ca), is a community effort that will make people’s lives easier and give them a better way to manage their diet,” said Paul Shay, National Executive Director of The Kidney Foundation of Canada.

“The site looks great! I look forward to working with patients using this resource,” said renal dietitian Shannon Chesterfield.

And for Patricia Treusch: “The Kidney Community Kitchen will help reduce the work, time, energy loss and stress that comes with understanding and handling the kidney diet—and managing the disease in general. This website will help to educate, assist with meal choices, calculate the nutritional intake, and lessen the load the person living with kidney disease already carries.”

The Kidney Community Kitchen was made possible by a generous bequest from the estate of James MacOwen Andrews. Mr. Andrews had a keen interest in diet, nutrition and prevention of kidney disease and renal failure. He spent considerable effort researching and managing his diet as a result of his own kidney problems. He was frustrated that good information was hard to find. Thanks to his personal insight regarding the challenges of living with a kidney diet – and his generosity – [www.kidneycommunitykitchen.ca](http://www.kidneycommunitykitchen.ca) is now available to help reduce the burden for others.

#### About The Kidney Foundation:

The Kidney Foundation of Canada is the national volunteer organization committed to reducing the burden of kidney disease. It does so by funding stimulating and innovative research; providing education and support; promoting access to high quality health care; and increasing public awareness and commitment to advancing kidney health and organ donation.

Anyone who is inspired by Mr. Andrews’s bequest and this new online resource to help reduce the burden of kidney disease can visit [www.kidneycampaign.ca](http://www.kidneycampaign.ca) or [www.kidney.ca/page.aspx?pid=658#bequest](http://www.kidney.ca/page.aspx?pid=658#bequest) to find out how they, too, can make a difference.

- 30 -

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