

## Home dialysis relief

Kidney patient benefits from the medical convenience of hemodialysis

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**DRAIN** — A new accessory sits in the living room of Kimberly Delaney's home. It might not match the decor, but its usefulness is unmatched.

Delaney, 43, is a dialysis patient and the new equipment is a 70-pound portable dialysis machine. Delaney prepares her new NxStage System One with the help of her husband, Daniel, 56, to administer short, daily home hemodialysis, or home dialysis.

"It's fairly new," Delaney said. "As far as I know, I'm the only one in Douglas County who's been trained on this kind of machine."

Delaney, who moved to Drain two years ago, was diagnosed with kidney disease in 1998 while living in San Diego. She went on dialysis for three years while waiting to receive a kidney transplant. She received a kidney that only lasted six months and promptly returned to dialysis.

Delaney, a freelance writer and poet, did public relations and community relations for a credit union while living in San Diego. Daniel Delaney is an Army veteran and a writer.

Both are trained to use the machine.

About a year ago, Delaney learned about the concept of home dialysis from the Internet.

"I surf the Web and I belong to a dialysis patient mailing list," she said.

Delaney said she was excited about the prospect of dialysis at home and told her doctor about it. Delaney underwent three weeks of training to prepare to dialyze at home. She and Daniel drove to Salem for four hours a day, five days a week of training at the DaVita Salem Dialysis clinic.

"We decided this was a commitment we were willing to make," she said.

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Kimberly Delaney checks her blood pressure while her husband, Daniel Delaney, readies a dialysis machine at their Drain home Thursday.

**JON AUSTRIA / N-R staff photo**

Diane Platz, home training nurse at DaVita Salem Dialysis, trained the Delaneys on executing home dialysis. She said they did a great job.

Platz said Delaney now performs dialysis six days a week, which is more like the kidneys function.

“They’ll have more energy and just feel better all around,” she said of home dialysis patients. The machine was paid for through insurance.

Before home dialysis, Delaney traveled to the DaVita Roseburg/Mercy Dialysis three days a week for 3 1/2 hours of dialysis. Now dialysis takes 2 1/2 hours. Overall, Delaney said, it’s less time-consuming because she doesn’t have to travel.



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Delaney monitors her dialysis machine during kidney care at her home.  
**JON AUSTRIA / N-R staff photo**

Plus, 2 1/2 hours is about the time she’d sit and watch a movie, surf the Internet and check e-mail, she said.

“This way, I can sit at home, I can wear whatever I want to wear, I don’t have to deal with the inconvenience of traffic or weather.”

“I like it. It keeps her healthy — that’s all that matters to me,” Daniel Delaney said.

“It’s really great for folks to be able to do this in the comfort of their own home,” Platz said. “They have more freedom as to the time of day they can do the treatment.”

Delaney said this way she can dialyze whenever she wants.

“I’m not a morning person, so I don’t have to do it in the morning.”

The unit has an electrical outlet connected to the phone line, so if problems arise users can contact customer service for troubleshooting.

“Home dialysis requires more responsibility on the patient’s part,” Delaney said.

“ I guess part of it is I’m a control freak,” she said. “I feel more comfortable doing it myself.”

The patient needs to have a partner who’s willing to help them in order to perform dialysis at home, Platz said.

“I don’t know what I’d do without Daniel,” Delaney said.

Delaney is a patient advocate to ensure others like her can have access to lifesaving care. She recently traveled to Washington, D.C., to lobby Congress to support quality dialysis care.



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Kim Delaney of Drain undergoes kidney treatment with her portable dialysis machine at her home Thursday. Delaney, who suffered from kidney failure in 1998, no longer has to go to Roseburg to seek treatment. She is now able to undergo the kidney treatment at her home six days a week with her new dialysis machine at home. The home dialysis treatment takes about two hours.

**JON AUSTRIA / N-R staff photo**

Delaney joined other members of the DaVita Patient Citizens to educate lawmakers about the Kidney Care Quality Improvement Act, which would provide adequate funding for dialysis providers and contribute to important kidney failure prevention efforts.

Delaney said the bill will save money because patients will get better care and won't have to be hospitalized.

"I got a chance to talk to my representatives. I got to share my story of being a dialysis patient and what that's like," she said. "They can see that we're fairly healthy and are able to be active and lobby on behalf of dialysis patients."

Delaney is patiently waiting for a kidney transplant. "For me, I am not my kidney disease. This is a chronic illness, but I can live with it."

Delaney looks forward to returning to work eventually, when she has another transplant.

"For me, that's the ultimate goal. The transplant is not a cure; it's just another treatment option."

"In the meantime," she said, "this is a very convenient form of dialysis."

She said home dialysis gives her more versatility.

"I don't have to schedule my life around dialysis – I schedule dialysis around my life."

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