

# The Kidney Corner: Urine Obstruction

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In previous issues of the Kidney Corner, we have discussed several different causes of kidney damage, including diabetes, high blood pressure and glomerulonephritis (an inflammation of the kidneys). One common cause of kidney damage we have not previously discussed is obstruction to the flow of urine.

Urine leaves the kidneys and travels to the bladder by way of the ureters, paired tubes that lie at the back of the abdomen and connect the kidneys to the bladder. Urine then leaves the bladder by the urethra, a single tube which leads to the exterior.

Complete blockage of one ureter stops all function to one kidney. This can be caused by a stone or tumor, and if it happens suddenly it is usually quite painful. The kidney involved may have no function at all, but if the other kidney is working well, there may be little or no change in kidney function, so kidney failure is not usual in this situation.

Of course, it's best to try to restore drainage of the affected kidney to prevent permanent damage. It's rare for stones to occur in both kidneys at the same time, but some types of



tumors may affect both ureters and cause severe kidney failure.

Obstruction of the urinary tract lower down, for example in the urethra, effectively blocks the drainage of both kidneys, so kidney failure is common in this situation.

The most common cause of urethral obstruction in men is prostate enlargement. The prostate gland is situated around the uppermost part of the urethra, and as it expands (which is very common in men as they age), it can gradually close off the urethra. This leads to ballooning of the bladder, and eventually the back pressure can affect the kidneys, leading to kidney failure.

Since this usually happens gradually, men may not be aware of the damage being sustained to

their urinary tract. Early symptoms include a need for frequent urination (since the bladder does not empty well with each urination), a need to urinate at night, and a decrease in the strength of the urinary stream.

During a physical examination, a doctor may check for enlargement of the prostate. A blood test called prostate specific antigen, or PSA, can also be used to check for prostate problems.

If urinary obstruction is detected early, relief of the obstruction can potentially reverse the kidney damage. Unfortunately, longstanding obstruction may cause kidney failure that can't be corrected. Obstruction lower in the urinary tract can be temporarily relieved by a bladder catheter called a Foley catheter.

For most men with prostatic obstruction, a surgery to open up the prostate gland is usually a better long-term solution. Obstruction higher up the urinary tract, for example in the ureter, may require a more invasive method of restoring drainage, sometimes using a tube that drains directly out of the back (a "nephrostomy") or sometimes by a stent, or tube inside the ureter that drains urine into the bladder.

# Keeping Rabies at Bay

Media Release  
Southern Ute Tribal Member  
Health Benefits

What is rabies? Rabies is a deadly disease that is caused by a virus that attacks the nervous system. All mammals, including humans, are susceptible. Rabies is transmitted by contact with saliva of an infected animal, usually through a bite wound. If you think you have been exposed to rabies, make sure to call your doctor.

Which animals might have rabies? Mainly wild animals like bats, skunks, foxes, raccoons, bobcats and coyotes. Cats, dogs and livestock can also become infected with rabies if they have not been vaccinated and are bitten by rabid wild animals. Rodents like rats, mice, gerbils, guinea pigs and squirrels are not likely to be infected with rabies. The best way to protect yourself and your family is to avoid touching, handling or adopting wild or stray animals.



illustration courtesy www.nlm.nih.org

## How do people get rabies?

People can get rabies from animal bites, or, rarely, from infected saliva getting into the eyes, nose, mouth or an open wound. Brain tissue can also be infectious and should not be handled, such as when skinning an animal.

## How do I know if an animal has rabies?

The first sign is usually a change in the animal's behavior. Animals might act more aggressive or more tame than usual. Nocturnal animals like skunks, foxes and bats might be out during the day. Rabid animals might stagger, tremble or seem weak. Bats might be found on the ground, unable to fly. Rabid animals might appear agitated and excited or paralyzed and frightened. Sometimes, rabid animals don't show any signs of illness before death from rabies. Thus contact with wild animals should always be avoided. If a wild animal does not run away when you approach it, it might be sick or injured. Do not try to help it. If an animal is acting strangely, stay away from the animal and call local law enforcement.

## What should I do if an animal bites me?

Immediately wash the bite wound with soap and water. If the wound requires medical treatment, contact your local medical clinic or health center. Try to capture the animal without damaging its head or risking further

exposure. Notify local law enforcement or animal control. If the biting animal is a dog, cat or livestock animal, place it under 10-to-14-day observation. If it remains healthy for that period, no risk of rabies transmission exists. If a bat, skunk, fox, coyote or other wild animal bites you, the animal should be presumed rabid until laboratory testing is complete. Contact your doctor and law enforcement immediately.

If the animal is not captured, you will need to consult your doctor about whether you need to start anti-rabies preventative treatment.

## How can I help prevent rabies?

Keep people and pets away from wild animals. Never leave pet food in your yard; it attracts wild animals. Do not rescue seemingly abandoned young wild animals. Vaccinate all dogs and cats against rabies. Take precautions when camping, hunting or fishing. Avoid sleeping on open ground without a closed tent or camper. Keep pets on a leash and do not allow them to wander. Wear impermeable gloves when skinning carcasses. Don't disturb roosting bats. If you see a bat on the ground, don't touch it. Report the bat and its location to local law enforcement or animal control. Place a box over the bat to contain it. Be careful not to damage the bat in any way; it must be intact for rabies testing.

# San Juan Basin Health Department Public Health News Briefs

## Expansion of Medicaid, CHP+

Colorado is currently expanding the number of individuals and families who can be covered by Medicaid or CHP+. A family of four can now make \$55,000 a year and qualify for CHP+ or up to \$22,056 and qualify for Medicaid. This means that almost 70,000 currently uninsured individuals, including children, can now receive medical coverage (including an estimated 44,000 parents who have a child qualifying for Medicaid and 24,000 children and pregnant women eligible for CHP+ health coverage).

This increase in coverage for our state's uninsured is at no added cost to the taxpayer due to a new hospital provider fee under the Colorado Healthcare Affordability Act. Funds from this fee will be matched with federal dollars, totaling an estimated \$1.2 billion annually. See www.cchp.org for information.

## Prevention PSA Contest

Tell the teens in your life about the Stay Teen PSA Art Contest! Teens 13-19 are eligible to submit their artwork and ideas about teen pregnancy prevention. The National Campaign will be accepting entries by mail and online until September 30. Winning entries will be used by The National Campaign on postcards, posters and other materials distributed nationwide. Winners will receive a \$250 gift card. For more information and to read the official contest rules, visit www.stayteen.org/contest.

## Beat the Back-to-School Rush

Make sure your child's immunization record is up to date for all school-required vaccines. A complete list of Colorado School Required Vaccinations is at www.cdph.state.co.us/dc/Immunization/Forms/ped\_sche.d.pdf.

## Lasso Tobacco Coalition

The Lasso Tobacco Coalition will meet Thursday, July 22 from 11:30 to 1 p.m. in the Columbine Room at San Juan Basin Health. To RSVP, call 970-247-5702 ext. 227.

## Screenings for Senior Citizens

The Senior Outreach program continues to provide free screenings to our senior citizens. Our nurse tests blood pressure, temperature, heart rate, oxygen level and blood glucose level. All take place from 11 a.m. to noon. Anyone 60 years or older can receive a free nursing visit at home by calling the Senior Outreach Nurse at 970-749-4007.

- Aug. 12 in Durango at the La Plata County Senior Center.
- July 15, Aug. 19 in Ignacio at the Ignacio Senior Center.
- Aug. 6, Sept. 3 in Bayfield at Pine River Valley Senior Center.

# Native Violence Response Project Sees Progress

Media Release  
The Family Violence Prevention Fund

A program funded by two federal agencies and implemented by some of the nation's leading domestic violence organizations saw success in improving the health system's response to domestic violence at Indian, tribal and urban health care facilities across the United States.

When the program began in 2002, just four percent of women at Indian Health Service facilities were screened by doctors and nurses for domestic violence. By 2009, when the program ended, 48 percent of women who sought services at these facilities were being screened.

A new report offers a series of recommendations to continue the progress and ensure that many more American Indian/Alaska native domestic violence victims get the help that they need when they seek medical care at clinics and hospitals.

"Building Domestic Violence Health Care Responses: A Promising Practices Report" finds that, over the course of the program, annual routine assessment for intimate partner and domestic violence of Native women increased 12-fold. That is because the program offered an effective response to violence, identified best practices to raise awareness, improved clinical responses, and strengthened community partnerships to help victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Numerous studies have found that rates of domestic violence are appreciably higher for Native women than for women of any other race or ethnicity. A 2008 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report found that 39 percent of Native women reported being victims of partner violence some time in their lives.

The program, which was funded by the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Indian Health Service, engaged more

than 100 health care facilities and domestic violence advocacy programs across the country to improve the response to domestic violence. It was conceptualized and managed by the Family Violence Prevention Fund in partnership with faculty from Sacred Circle and Mending the Sacred Hoop Technical Assistance Program.

Indian health centers in 18 of the 35 states with federally recognized tribes participated; the project included work with the Cherokee, Choctaw and Navajo tribes, among others.

"The Indian Health Service is proud to have been a part of this groundbreaking project," said Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, director of the Indian Health Service. "As a practicing physician in Arizona, I saw firsthand the effects of domestic violence on my patients, their families and communities. I have real hope that more health care providers and tribal communities will learn from the promising practices identified in this report."

Commissioner Bryan Samuels of the Administration for Children, Youth and Families said his organization helped fund the work because finding a solution to domestic violence in Native communities is important.

"This project offers real hope for Native women facing violence, that their health providers will recognize the abuse and know how to help them and their children," he said.

Anna Marjavi, FVPPF program manager and co-author of the Promising Practices report, said it's important to get health care providers involved.

"In Indian country, health care providers are often the first responders to domestic violence, and the health care setting offers a critical opportunity for early identification and primary prevention of abuse," she said. "This report is designed to share all of our lessons learned from this innovative project. We call on all Indian health and community advocacy programs to use this tool to strengthen their communi-

ties' responses to violence."

In addition to increasing rates of assessment, the IHS/ACF Domestic Violence Project:

Trained staff members from more than 100 Indian, tribal and urban health care facilities and domestic violence advocacy programs across the country on domestic violence health system change.

Developed communitywide domestic violence response teams that include staff from health care, judicial, law enforcement, community programs and tribal councils.


Developed patient education materials, including two posters targeting men and boys with prevention messages specific to domestic violence.

Tailored the Electronic Health Record to integrate domestic violence routine assessment and implementation of screening reminders.


Raised public awareness and promoted social norm change through community walks, billboard campaigns, candlelight vigils, radio/TV shows, public service announcements, and staff participation in health fairs, rodeos and powwows.

Helped victims of domestic violence and sexual assault get the help they need to support their healing from the abuse and promote their health and wellness.

"We need to build on the successes of the IHS/ACF Domestic Violence Project and fund more programs to continue this remarkable progress," said FVPPF President Esta Soler. "Tribal communities will benefit if we replicate the promising practices and materials we've developed, continue to integrate domestic violence and sexual assault into trainings that improve the health care responses to violence, and strengthen the tribal response to sexual assault. We also must expand our work to engage men as role models, address the impact of violence on children, and do more to teach the next generation that violence is never the answer."



"I want to be a dentist just like my Grumpy and Uncle Jordan, when I grow up."  
-Wyatt "Bug" Sanders



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**United Blood Services**

**United Blood Services Office**  
Mon., July 19 - 23, 1 pm - 6 pm  
146 Sawyer Dr.,  
Bodo Park, Durango

**City of Durango**  
Tues., July 20, 10 am - 1 pm  
Recreation Center,  
2700 Main, Durango

**Silverton Recreation Center**  
Wed., Jul 21, 2 pm - 6 pm  
Kendall Mountain Resort  
14th Street, Silverton

**La Plata Electric Assoc.**  
Thur., July 22, 1 pm - 4 pm  
Board Room  
45 Stewart Drive, Durango

**Durango Mountain Resort**  
Fri., July 23, 11 am - 2 pm  
Pint For A Pint  
Purgatory Village  
Community Center  
#1 Skier Place, Durango

**Cortez Animal Shelter**  
Sat., Jul 24, 10 am - 1 pm  
Blood Drive & Adopt-A-Thon  
Bloodmobile at  
Cortez Wal-Mart  
1835 E. Main, Cortez

[www.unitedbloodservices.org](http://www.unitedbloodservices.org)