



March 2022

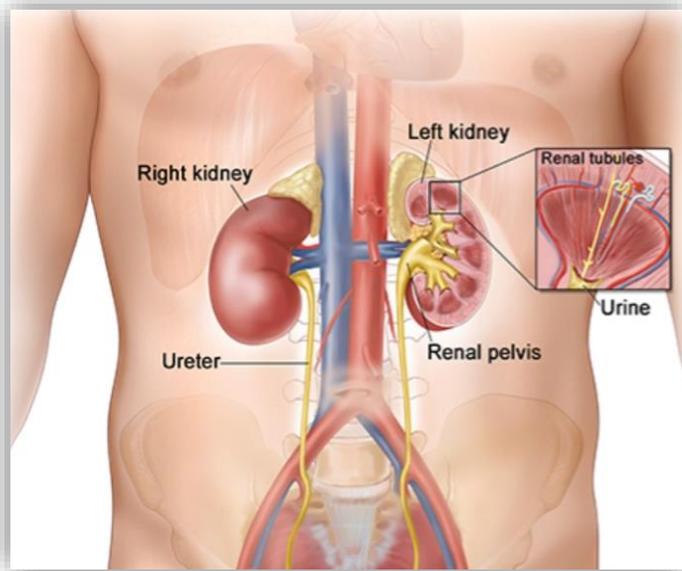
Dear Communities,

The VIVA Connects team hopes that you are all doing well and finding ways to safely enjoy activities outside. This newsletter has been designed to easily provide the most current and accurate health information to you all, so that you may keep yourselves and your community's safe. Please feel free to share this information with community members and loved ones.



Kidney Kindness Month

March is kidney awareness month, so take the time to understand how to care for and keep your kidneys healthy and working properly.



Let's start with the basics

Your kidney's job is to create urine, which helps wash out liquid waste from the body. The kidneys also help regulate blood pressure and assist in stimulating blood cell production from bone marrow. Kidneys are very important for overall health, which is why it is important to learn ways to better take care of them.

What is kidney (renal) cancer?

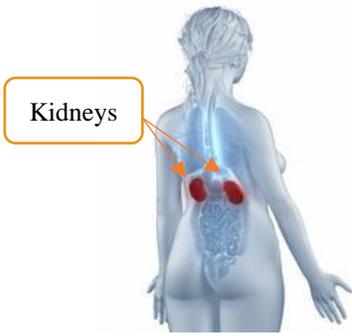
Kidney cancer is also called *kidney and renal pelvis cancer* or *renal cell cancer* as the center of the kidney is called the renal pelvis. When renal cells abnormally grow out of control it often leads to cancer. This cancer can then spread to other locations in the body and damage other organs. Without proper diagnosis, treatment, and care of renal cancer, the cancer can cause severe end-stage renal disease.

End-stage renal disease is when the kidneys no longer work, it can be fatal, and dialysis is required to survive.

Causes of renal cancer

- ***Smoking is the number one risk factor leading to renal cancer!**
- Living with high blood pressure
- Obese or overweight
- Taking some types of pain medication for a long time
- Genetically pre-disposed to renal cancer
- Having kidney stones
- Exposure to [trichloroethylene](#) (a chemical used to remove grease from metal)





Symptoms of renal cancer

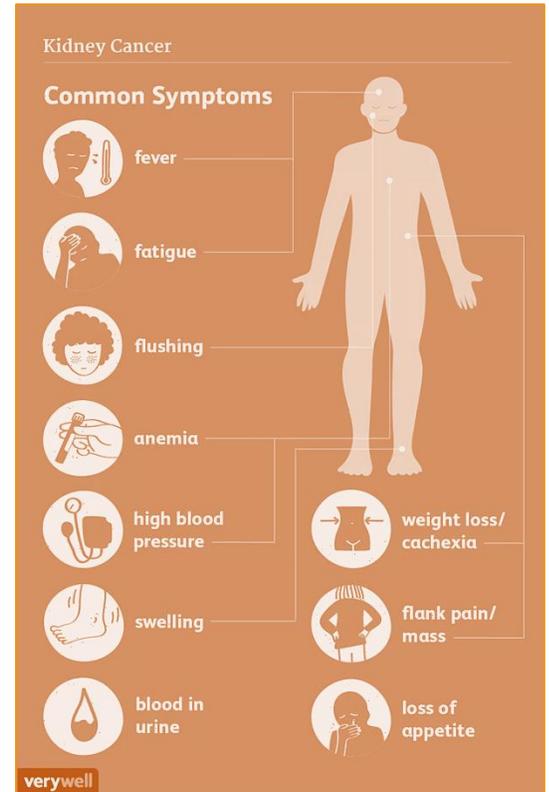
According to the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/kidney/index.htm) “A person with kidney or renal pelvis cancer may or may not have one or more of the symptoms listed here. The same symptoms can also come from other causes. If you have any of these symptoms, talk to your doctor.”

- Blood in your urine
- Feeling a lump or swelling of kidneys (middle of back area)
- Constant lower back and side pain
- Often feeling tired or not healthy
- Reoccurring fever
- Low appetite
- Unexpected weight loss
- Something blocking your lower gut/bowels

How can I keep my kidneys healthy?

- Don't smoke, and [try to quit if you do smoke](#)
- Be cautious if you work with the chemical [trichloroethylene](#)
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Eat healthy (lots of fruits and veggies!)
- Exercise everyday
 - Hard to find time or energy to exercise?

Spend ~30 minutes a day doing an activity that you like such as walking your dog, biking, playing a sport, etc. Find more info at [Move Your Way](#)



How much activity do I need?

Moderate-intensity aerobic activity

Anything that gets your heart beating faster counts.

at least
150
minutes
a week



Muscle-strengthening activity

Do activities that make your muscles work harder than usual.

at least
2
days
a week



AND

Tight on time this week? Start with just 5 minutes. It all adds up!

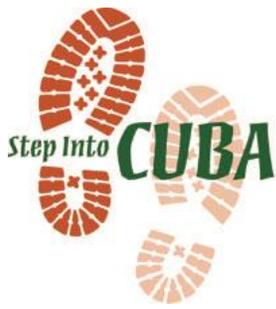
For more information, check out:

<https://health.gov/moveyourway>

<https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/kidney/index.htm>

<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/kidney-cancer/about.html>

<https://www.verywellhealth.com/kidney-cancer-signs-symptoms-and-complications-4160376>



The VIVA Connects and

Healthy Places Healthy People team visit Cuba!

On Thursday March 3rd, the VIVA Connects, and the Healthy Places Healthy People team traveled to Cuba, NM for a trails workshop training. The focus of this visit was to help teach the team members about the different resources and materials that help create sustainable trails in communities. Cuba is the pilot site for the VIVA Connects and HPHP team's work, as the [Step Into Cuba](#) program began nearly 13 years ago to promote physical activity and chronic disease risk reduction in the community of Cuba.



Dr. Richard Kozoll pointing out trail features along the Fisher Trail

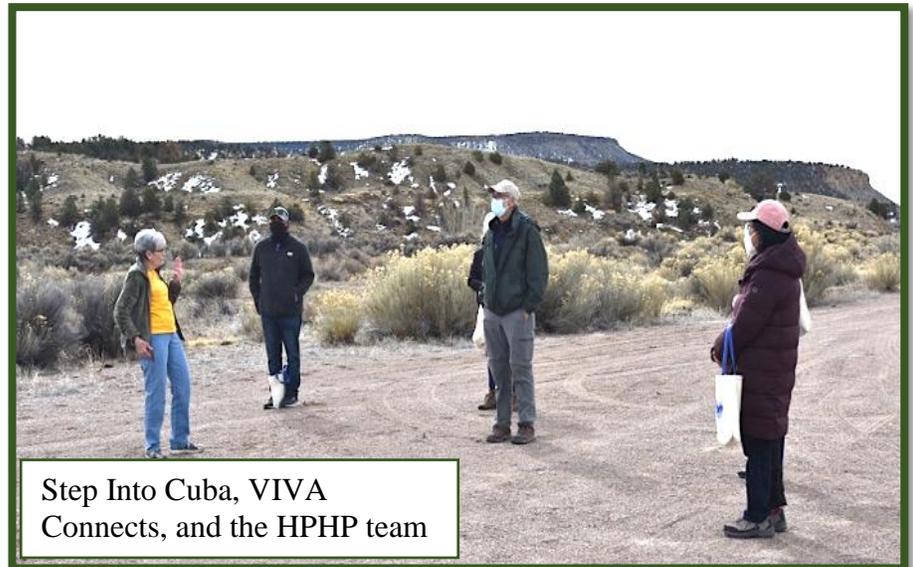
The team members visited the Becker-Mace trail, Fisher trail, Library Loop trail, St. Francis of Assisi Park trail, the US Forest Service office, visitor center, and Cuba schools. Each location has unique challenges to the planning and designing of the trail in that area, building the trail, maintaining the trail, and ensuring that kiosks and signage are present. The team learned that creating safe and accessible trails allow community members and visitors feel confident walking along the trails, and increase overall use of the trails.

Many of the trails were made possible by partnerships with the National Forest, BLM, private landowners, Step Into Cuba, Cuba schools, community volunteers, and other local organizations and community members. It takes a village to create beautiful walking paths, but they are so worth it!



Walking along the Fisher Trail to observe water bars, trail designation techniques, signage, etc.

The VIVA Connects and HPHP team would like to thank Dr. Richard Kozoll and Dr. Sally Davis for their dedication and work of Step Into Cuba, VIVA Connects, HPHP, and efforts to put this trails training workshop together. Now our team members are more knowledgeable and ready to help all communities around NM establish their own walking trails!



Step Into Cuba, VIVA Connects, and the HPHP team

Dr. Sally Davis pointing out the importance of carsonite signs as trail markers, and a way to show infographic information for trail users

If you are a community who would like to have a walkability workshop and/or would like to organize a field trip to another community/invite a community to learn from your trails, please contact Laurel Fimbel at preventionresearchcenterunm@gmail.com for more information and assistance. We are ready to help to help you create places for people to walk and be healthy!

Sincerely,

The VIVA Connects Team

Compiled by Laurel Fimbel for VIVA Connects

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