



Kidney News

Newsletter of the Canberra Region Kidney Support Group Inc.
 ABN 77 396 063 641
 All Correspondence to: PO Box 5051, GARRAN ACT 2605 or
 E Mail: crksg@yahoo.com

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the CRKSG.

Volume 5

Autumn 2005

Issue 1

National Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) Strategy Workshop – 4 Feb 05, Sydney

Kidney disease is stalking one in three Australians, unchallenged by any co-ordinated national health strategy according to Kidney Health Australia.

The outcomes of a day long National Chronic Kidney Disease Strategy Summit in Sydney, with seventy leaders of the Australian kidney fraternity, included the critical need to:

- Build capacity and infrastructure nationally to address the burden of kidney disease,
- Raise profile and awareness of kidney health issues amongst consumers, GPs, practice nurses and allied health professionals,
- Develop and imbed nationally an integrated model of primary prevention and care in relation to kidney health, and
- Empower consumers through a self management model including awareness of risk, early detection, effective treatments and improvements in organ donation.

Opening the proceedings, the Minister for Health and Ageing The Hon Tony Abbott, expressed interest in receiving the recommendations for a National Chronic Kidney Disease Strategy from the group.

Summit findings and future directions will be further documented in the next two weeks enabling stakeholder development of action plans around each priority area. These will form the basis of a comprehensive submission to Government with programs aimed at reducing the burden of kidney disease in Australia. Kidney disease is a silent killer. One in three Australians is at increased risk.

Inside This Issue

- 1 **National Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) Strategy Workshop**
- 1 **In the Media - Organ donors give thanks.**
- 2 **In the Media - New Zealand to pay compensation to live organ donors**
- 3 **Know your Doctors**
- 3 **The First Transplant**
- 4 **Calendar of Events**
- 5 **Managing Stress: What Kidney Patients, Family Members, and Caregivers Need to Know**

IN THE MEDIA



Organ donors give thanks.

Organ donors and recipients gathered at Commonwealth Park on 19 Feb 05 in Canberra for the start of ACT Organ and Tissue Awareness Week.

Organ Donor Week was launched by MLA for Brindabella Mick Gentleman.

A concert at Stage 88 featuring live music provided the entertainment but all the smiles belonged to those happy to be taking it all in, thanks to a second chance at life courtesy of organ donation. Also among those attending yesterday's launch was James Rucska, 34, of Queanbeyan, who went through the drama of a kidney transplant in 1993, only to have his transplanted organ pack up last year.

The transplant had been a success and his health had improved almost instantly. He had been able to return to his normal life, studying and working as a builder.

But Mr Rucska's original condition came back and destroyed the new kidney.

And so having been on a waiting list for 3 years before the transplant, he now finds himself back on a dialysis machine at Canberra Hospital three days a week for four hours each time.

"I have three [kidneys] that don't work," he said. "My two original ones stopped working years ago, in 1990. And the third one stopped working last year."

Doctors don't remove the kidneys unless they have to. "It could be a couple of months [before I get another kidney] or it could be years, the way things are going at the moment." Mr Rucska said the ultimate failure of his transplant had been stressful and a big disappointment.

Another who was glad to be there to enjoy the fun at Stage 88 yesterday was Nick Farley, 40, of Phillip, who had a kidney transplant almost a decade ago.

Mr Farley had been on a waiting list for eight months before the operation.

"I would just like to encourage everyone in Australia to sign on to save a life, because I have had 10 fantastic years and I might have plenty more," he said.

"But I might not be here if it wasn't for that." "I'm totally, forever, grateful to the family who was kind enough to donate the organ that I got, and I've been able to enjoy life like any normal 40-year-old would," he said.

Mr Gentleman said that in the ACT last year, six people

Continued page 2

In the Media - Organ donors give thanks – Continued

donated organs, making the territory the second-most generous jurisdiction in Australia in terms of the gift of life.

For more information on becoming an organ donor go to www.hic.gov.au

From The Canberra Times
New heart or out in a wooden box - Organ donors give thanks By Ben Houston
Sunday, 20 February 2005

IN THE MEDIA

New Zealand to pay compensation to live organ donors
WELLINGTON, New Zealand: New Zealanders who donate a kidney or part of a liver as a living organ donor are to be paid for lost income and childcare costs, the government said Friday.

Social Development Minister Steve Maharey said the payments were not a financial incentive for donors, but a contribution toward lost earnings and their sacrifice.

"People who donate a kidney or live tissue for transplantation in New Zealand may be eligible for support to help cover associated loss of income and childcare costs. This will include donors from overseas," Maharey said.

The tax-free support, equivalent to 165 New Zealand dollars (US\$118; euro91) a week, would be available for 12 weeks after an operation.

New Zealand has one of the lowest organ donation rates in the developed world.

Since 1993 the nation's donor rate has fluctuated between 34 and 46 donors a year. About 350 people are on waiting lists for organ transplants, mostly kidneys. People can wait up to 30 months for an organ.

One of the nation's high-profile organ donor cases was given widespread publicity last year when famed former All Black rugby winger Jonah Lomu was gifted a kidney by a friend. Lomu has since announced his return to playing professional competitive rugby.

Health Minister Annette King hoped the payments would reduce financial barriers to donors. New Zealand Kidney Foundation spokeswoman Carmel Gregan-Ford welcomed the decision.

"I think it's great, we've been lobbying Government for quite a while," she said, adding "it's a start ... and will help eventually probably decrease some of the waiting time on dialysis."--AP

IN THE MEDIA

ABC News Online Friday, February 18, 2005. 3:31pm (AEDT)

Australians urged to become organ donors

The Federal Government has launched a campaign to make organ donation a talking point around every Australian kitchen table.

Australia has one of the worst records among developed nations for organ donation, despite having some of the best medical staff in the world.

Continued this page

From previous column

In a bid to boost Australia's low rate of organ donation, the Government is sending a consent form to every household asking people to register as donors.

It is hoped this direct action will lead to a substantial increase in donor numbers, and take away the need for families to make a difficult decision when their loved ones die.

Federal Health Minister Tony Abbott says it is vital people talk about the issue with their families.

"Do we ever want to deny people life because we didn't take the five minutes it would have taken us to fill out the form?" he said.

The mailout will start in April and the Government will also operate one single national register of consent.

Donor Awareness Week

Change is in the air, however, with the number of Australians signing up to become organ donors increasing by 21 per cent over the past year.

Donor Awareness Week begins today and organisers are hoping to keep the momentum going.

Australians Donate chairwoman Marcia Coleman says about 1,600 people are currently waiting for a transplant. She says while there are 5 million on the Australian Organ Donor register it is vital more sign on.

"Only about 1 per cent of people die in circumstances where they can move on to being considered an organ donor," she said.

"Even though there might be many people on the organ donor register, and we hope that that number will double over time, it's still a very small percentage of the population who can actually be considered for organ donation."

Celebrity support

Cricketer Shane Warne has also added his support to the national organ donation campaign.

Warne says it is a difficult issue that can have amazing impact.

"It is a big decision, yes, but as I said before it can help lives, it can save lives and they can be children's lives as well," he said.

"So I urge people, everybody, to give it serious thought, chat to the people who are close to you and just sign on that dotted line."

The CRKSG needs members to:

- Lobby or participate as Patient Representatives,
- Contribute to the newsletter, and
- Act as patient support officer.

The CRKSG can provide the infrastructure that can support anyone with bright ideas that further the aims of the group.

The CRKSG participated in the National Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) Strategy Workshop. If you would like to participate in similar workshops, contact the CRKSG at crksg@yahoo.com or PO Box 5051 GARRAN ACT 2605 or leave a message at SHOUT on 6290 1984.



**Know your Doctors
This issue is the
fourth in a series of
articles on the Renal
Doctors at Canberra
Hospital.**

Dr Tony Clarkson.

Dr Tony Clarkson has commenced as Director of the Renal Unit at the Canberra Hospital. From 1973 - 1997 he was Director of the Renal unit at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and continued working at the RAH until he retired from his position in July 2003 after 40 years as a Renal Physician. He is currently on a leave of absence as President of the SA Medical Board. Tony has taken on the Directorship for six months following Dr Martin Gallagher's departure to undertake Research in Sydney. During his tenure as Director, Tony intends to increase the amount of patient participation in decision affecting renal patients.

Tony had planned to travel around Australia after his retirement; however he is happy to spend some time in the Nation's Capital. His wife, Helen, is reported to be checking out the National exhibits, including three visits to the National Gallery. Tony's interests include his 3 children, 4 grandchildren, AFL and cricket. For those AFL supporters he barracks for the Adelaide Crows and I am told once played VFL. Tony and Helen have received a warm welcome from the Canberra Community and we wish them well during their stay with us.

The First Transplant

Fifty years ago, Ronald Herrick wasn't thinking about making medical history that would one day lead to saving countless lives. He just wanted to save one life - his brother's.

He said it took him no time at all to agree to donate a kidney to his dying twin, Richard. But that 5 1/2-hour operation on December 23, 1954, would not only keep Richard alive for eight more years, it would lead to thousands of kidney transplants and ultimately the transplant of other organs from the heart to the liver. Herrick's doctor would win a Nobel Prize.

"It was a start but they've done an awful lot of transplants since then," said Herrick, a soft-spoken man who accepts his place in the annals of medical breakthroughs but plays down his place in history.

More than 400,000 transplants have been performed in the United States since the first successful one 50 years ago at what's now known as Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. More than 25,000 occur each year in the United States.

Back in 1954, though, the surgery had not been done successfully and doctors were struggling to find a way to stop rejection of the transplanted organ that had claimed the lives of every other transplant recipient.

As the story goes, Ron Herrick told a doctor at the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital he would gladly give up a kidney if it would help his brother, who was dying from chronic nephritis, an inflammation of the kidneys.

Continued this page

The doctor told him it wasn't possible, but then he had an idea: Since the Herricks were identical twins, the likelihood of the organ being rejected would be reduced. Maybe it was possible after all.

Richard Herrick was transferred to what was then Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, where extensive work on transplants was under way.

Dr. Joseph Murray, the lead surgeon who won the Nobel Prize in 1990, said he had prepared for two years for the operation, discovering that a transplanted kidney, in the absence of immune problems, can function. "And then on our doorstep, we happened to have had identical twins," he told the New York Organ Donor Network, which coordinates organ and tissue donations in New York area. "One was dying of kidney disease, the other one was healthy. It was the perfect human setup for our laboratory model." Before the surgery, the team made sure to do its homework. Murray even went so far as to have both brothers fingerprinted by the Boston Police Department to ensure that they were identical, not fraternal, twins. Murray said there were more than medical issues to deal with. Back then, some had equated transplant attempts with desecration of the body, and religious leaders were kept abreast of developments, he said.

While most felt it was ethically acceptable to donate an organ, others "felt that we were playing God and that we shouldn't be doing all of these, quote, experiments on human beings," he told AP.

Australian Organ Donor Register

Australian health ministers have agreed to changes to the Australian Organ Donor Register to make a person's wish to donate tissues and organs after death more effective. This should significantly increase the availability of life-saving organs for transplantation.

Under current arrangements, families of a potential organ donor have to give consent after a person's death.

Under the new arrangements, clinicians will not need to seek families' consent for a person who has registered legally valid consent through the Australian Organ Donor Register. Instead, clinicians will advise families of the individual's legally expressed wishes and ask whether the deceased person may have changed his or her mind since registering.

Family sensitivities will not be trampled on. If families maintain sincerely held objections even in the face of a deceased person's legally recorded consent, organ donation will not proceed.

The Commonwealth Government will operate the new Australian Organ Donor Register from July 2005 as a register of consent rather than intention. Some currently registered donors will need to lodge a new form to strengthen their registration to consent. States and territories will issue guidelines asking clinicians to routinely consult the register so that they can inform families of the legally expressed wishes of the deceased when organ and tissue donation is actually contemplated.

The number of Australians registered as intending donors on the Australian Organ Donor Register reached a record high of over 5.1 million in December 2004. Instances of organ and tissue donation in Australia were up by 18 per cent in 2004 compared with 2003. HIC website 28 Jan 05

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Member’s Dinner at the National Press Club

The Canberra Region Kidney Support Group invites Members to dine at the National Press Club, 16 National Circuit Barton, Ph: 62733644, on Friday 18th March 2005 from 7.30pm.

The dinner has been organised to allow members the opportunity to join together in a relaxed environment.

Please RSVP by Friday 11th March to crksg@yahoo.com or by telephoning SHOUT on 6290 1984.

Canberra Region Kidney Support Group Meetings

When: The Second Tuesday of each month.
8th Mar 05, 12th Apr 05, 10th May 05, 14th Jun 05, 12th Jul 05, 9th Aug 05, 13th Sep 05, 11th Oct 05, 8th Nov 05, and 13th Dec 05.

Where: The Pearce Community Centre
Building 1, Collett Place
Pearce ACT 2607

When: 7.30 pm

Renal Education Program: “Living With Kidney Failure - 2005”

When: May 20th and 27th
August 19th and 26th
November 18th and 25th

Where: Canberra Community Dialysis Centre (CCDC) Gaunt Place Garran

When: 1.30 pm

Limited seating – Bookings Essential

Contact Mikki on 62443062 or Alison on 62443353.

Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions Course

The “Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions” Course is a six week education program, two and half hours per week, designed to assist people with chronic conditions to develop ways of taking a more active part in their self care. *The Course is free to participants.*

Tuggeranong

Friday 10.00-12.30
Aug 19,26
Sep 2,9,16,23

Belconnen

Monday 10.00-12.30
May 2,9,16,23,30
Jun 6

Wednesday 1.00-3.00
Oct 26
Nov 2,9,16,23,30

Monday 1.00-3.30
Oct 10,17,24,31
Nov 7,14

Contact: Community Health Intake 6207 9977

Continued this page

Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions Course Continued

Woden

Wednesday 10.00-12.30
Feb 23,
Mar 2,9,16,23,30

Tuesday 10.00-12.30
May 3,10,17,24,31
Jun 7

Thursday 10.00-12.30
Jul 28
Aug 4,18,25
Sep 1,8

Tuesday 10.00-12.30
Oct 11,18,25
Nov 1,8,15

Contact: Arthritis ACT 6288 4244

Pearce

Monday 10.00-12.30
May 2,9,16,23,30
Jun 6

Monday 10.00-12.30
Oct 10,17,24,31
Nov 7,14

Contact: SHOUT 6290 1984

How to manage your own illness!

Kidney Health Australia has released a 16-page booklet on positive self-management for those living with an illness or caring for someone with an illness.

The booklet provides important information and tips for healthy living, listening and tuning into your health, and improving your well-being. The organisation says “it’s all you need to know about healthy living so that you’re in charge!”

For you free copy of this booklet, You're in Charge - self-management health book, contact Kidney Health Australia on 1800 682 531

The National Disability Abuse & Neglect Hotline

The National Disability Abuse & Neglect Hotline is a free and confidential service that takes reports of abuse & neglect of people who have a disability. Phone:1800 880 052
TTY:1800 301 130 NRS: 1800 555 677 TIS: 131 450
<http://www.disabilityhotline.org/>

The Complaints Resolution and Referral Services

The Complaints Resolution and Referral Services assists with the resolution of complaints about Australian Government – funded disability employment and advocacy services.

Information Sessions:

Monday 28 Feb 05, 7pm – 9pm or
Tuesday 1 Mar 05, 10am –12pm
Weston Creek Community Centre, Parkinson St, Weston
RSVP to Advocacy ACTION on 62864489.

Managing Stress: What Kidney Patients, Family Members, and Caregivers Need to Know

By Ramiro Valdez, PhD Texas

Most people go their entire lives without giving their kidneys any thought. Relatively few people even know what kidneys do. It is only when they stop working that people realize just how important are these small internal organs.

Emotional Stress

Trying to replace what kidneys used to do requires dialysis treatments three times a week, or daily exchanges for the peritoneal patient, or a transplant. But dialysis is just the beginning. There are daily medicines, dietary restrictions, fluid limitations, and financial burdens that accompany dialysis treatments. This can result in extreme emotional stress.



Emotional stress, although common, can become overwhelming if not resolved correctly. The usual symptoms include:

- Restlessness;
- Changes in sleeping habits (either loss of, or too much, sleep);
- Changes in eating habits (loss of appetite or overeating of the wrong foods);
- Irritability;
- Headaches;
- Stomach problems;
- Inability to cope with common every day events; and
- Muscular aches and pains, especially along the shoulders and back.

The Amount of Stress

The amount of stress will vary from one kidney patient to another. Some have very few medical complications, and their dialysis experience restricts them only a little. These patients will have little stress associated with their illness. They may experience some headaches or tightening of the muscles along the neck and shoulder, but little more.

Others have many medical complications besides kidney failure, or find themselves isolated, uninformed, and lonely. These patients may find it hard to cope with daily concerns. This can lead to extreme stress and, perhaps, even more medical complications. Along with the headaches and

Continued this page

neck/shoulder aches, these people may have trouble sleeping, loss of appetite, and stomach problems such as frequent diarrhoea. Extreme cases of stress can lead to such problems as spastic colitis, irritable bowel syndrome, and weakened immunological systems.

Learning to Cope

The reality is that stress can worsen almost any illness, including kidney failure, and learning to cope with stress can make an illness more tolerable. There are several very effective ways to cope with stress, and patients may choose whichever method works best for them.

The following recommendations have been found helpful for other people with kidney failure. None will work for everyone, but one or two should work for almost any patient with kidney failure.

Meditation

Many people have found the simple exercises of Yoga helpful. Others choose to meditate with a relaxing walk along a river or through a forest. Some patients combine prayer with meditation if this fits into their lifestyle.



Meditation involves mentally "getting away" from the fuss and bother of the daily rush for a few minutes of calm and rejuvenation. This can be done simply by sitting still for ten or fifteen minutes and cleansing the mind of all thoughts. As simple as this sounds, it can be very helpful in relieving stress.

Exercise

Nearly any patient with renal failure can do some form of exercise, as approved by their doctor. For some patients, this involves 20 minutes of jogging, bike riding, or even aerobic workouts. For others with less stamina, this can mean simply walking around the kitchen table three or four times.

Any exercise allowed by the doctor will be helpful. The general rule of thumb is 20-30 minutes three times a week, whether it's jogging or simply walking slowly around the block. Exercise is indeed an excellent way to relieve stress.

Massage



For those who can afford it, hiring a masseuse can work wonders to relieve stress. Those patients who are not able to hire someone can participate in simple back rubbing with a spouse or family member.

Continued page 6

From page 5

Managing Stress – continued

Massage can relax tightened muscles and soften them once again, whether it's done professionally or by a family member. Relaxing the muscles will, in turn, go a long way towards coping better with stress.

Talking to Someone

Talking to someone about your problems or stressors is a tried and true method of stress relief. It is not necessary to hire a professional, although this is also helpful, but simply talking to a family member or friend helps.

Renal social workers are highly trained professionals who know how to listen, and wise patients will take advantage of this. Some people can talk to a pastor, rabbi, or priest, and this is also very helpful. It is important to talk to someone who will listen without wanting to unload his/her own problems in turn, but who will be supportive and simply hear you out. It is not necessary to seek or give advice, but simply talk things out with someone. The power of a receptive ear is remarkable for stress relief.

Medicines

There are excellent medicines on the market to help relieve stress. These can be recommended or even prescribed by a nephrologist. This can be done by simply talking to the doctor about stress and asking for a prescription to help.

Patients who are already taking numerous medicines a day may hesitate to take yet one more pill, but once they find the effects are helpful, they will be glad they are doing it. Kidney patients should avoid over-the-counter stress-relief medications unless their doctor recommends it.

Support Groups

Many dialysis clinics and transplant centers have support groups which patients can attend and talk to other patients about things that cause stress to them. This is an excellent way to relieve stress.



The supportive atmosphere of fellow patients can work wonders in helping people learn how to take better care of themselves. Fellow group members may also know of ways to cope with stress. Some people may not be comfortable talking about their problems in a group setting. They will do better to talk one-to-one to the clinic social worker or another staff member.

Continued this page

Patient Education

When it comes to taking care of oneself, there is no such thing as too much information. Finding the ways that dialysis, in its several forms, affects the body and mind is always helpful. Learning ways to enhance dialysis through taking good care of oneself is an act of self-empowerment. This, in turn, will give patients a greater sense of control over their lives.

Taking control over one's life is an excellent way to reduce stress. Listening to the doctor's advice and heeding the recommendations of the healthcare team is the beginning of a good education.

Individual Resolve

A quote attributed to Abraham Lincoln goes something like this: "Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be." While it seems simplistic, making up one's mind to see the glass as half full instead of half empty is very helpful and within everyone's reach.

Dialysis can be seen as a curse or a blessing that keeps one alive. Each patient has to decide for him- or herself which it will be.

Conclusion

There are other ways patients can cope with stress and improve their quality of life. Talking to their doctor or social worker is the first step in finding these ways. The important thing is that patients recognize that stress is common, that it can have some negative effects on their health, and that coping with stress successfully is always a healthy thing to do.

There is a Chinese proverb that says: "A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." Taking that first step toward recognizing stress and deciding to deal with it is where stress relief begins.

Ramiro Valdez, PhD, is Director of Patient Services for the End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Network of Texas in Dallas. He has over 20 years experience in ESRD and is the author of over 30 articles in renal journals and magazines. From iKidney's Lifestyles section.

The CRKSG needs your help to provide articles for the next newsletter. Contact the CRKSG at crksg@yahoo.com or PO Box 5051 GARRAN ACT 2605 or leave your article at the CCDC.

**Letters to the Editor – The Canberra Times
7 Feb 05**

Donors need a hand

The recent suggestion that kidney donors be paid for the time lost in wages during the operation and recovery is an excellent idea.

I was a donor to a relative eight years ago and it was OK for me because I had been in the Public Service for many years and was able access my sick leave.

But it must be difficult for other people who are without income if they donate a kidney.

I had to have many X-Rays, blood tests, etc, before I was accepted as a donor. I paid all the gap fees for such tests and I think that is unfair.

My donation has saved the health system many dollars and my relative has been able to generate more income because he is in better health.

There was the expense of traveling to Sydney and back for the operation. We tried to claim those expenses but the red tape was too difficult for me when I was in recovery.

Many people could find it difficult to meet all those costs and some would not be able to donate a kidney.

Pat Brown Mawson

The human mind.

I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulacly uesdnatnrd waht I was rdanieg. The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mind. Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deson't mtttaer in waht oreodr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae.

The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlefl, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig huh?



Renal Replacement Therapies

..... getting better all the time

The Renal Resource Centre NSW presented a one day conference for NSW and ACT renal patients in Sydney on 23 Oct 04. A 2 disc DVD pack or a 2 tape VHS set of the Conference is available from the CCDC or Renal Unit.

The conference covered:

- New Trends in Dialysis;
- Preventing Complications in Cardiovascular and Renal Bone disease;
- Making the Most of Life;
- Transplantation Update, including the future directions in Transplantation; and
- Stem Cell Research.

Presentations from The Conference are also available from the Renal Resource Centre web site at

<http://www.renalresource.com/events.php>

XV World Transplant Games in London, Canada

From July 16 - 24, 2005 the XV World Transplant Games in London, Canada will bring the world together to celebrate a second chance at life! More than 2000 transplant recipient athletes and accompanying friends and family representing over 55 countries are expected in London to prove that organ donation works!

For more information about the Australian Team (or competing for Australia) at the World Games, please contact Jan Wall (07) 3343 8561 or janwall@comcen.com.au

Transplant Australia NSW/ACT branch will be having a get together at the National Museum of Australia on Saturday 12th March at midday. An invitation has been extended to Members of CRKSG to attend.

Canberra Dialysis Caravan

Angela and Chris Lount have commenced organizing a Ball in June to raise funds to buy a caravan and make the necessary modifications to equip it with a dialysis machine.

The aim is to have a dialysis caravan available for all self care patients so that they are able to get away for an affordable holiday, without having to book into a hospital or travel back home for dialysis.

Angela is forming a committee to oversee the fund raising effort. Anyone able to donate items for the Ball can contact 6253 9615.

Coffee and the Heart

People with high blood pressure or heart disease should limit the amount of coffee they drink, or switch to decaffeinated brands, according to experts.

Caffeine makes the walls of blood vessels stiffer, meaning the blood pressure will be higher and the heart has to work harder to send blood around the body.

This effect is particularly important first thing in the morning. When healthy people took a dose of caffeine equivalent to two or three cups of coffee there was a 10 per cent increase in blood pressure and the heart's workload increased by about a third. These changes lasted for up to three hours.

The CRKSG needs members to:

- Lobby or participate as Patient Representatives,
- Contribute to the newsletter, and
- Act as patient support officer.

The CRKSG can provide the infrastructure that can support anyone with bright ideas that further the aims of the group.



**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
OR
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL
FOR FY 04/05**

Post Application to:
Canberra Region Kidney Support Group Inc
PO Box 5051 GARRAN ACT 2605.

Last Name: **First Name:**.....**Phone No:**.....

Address:.....**E Mail:**.....

I would like to make a voluntary donation to CRKSG for the amount of: \$..... Membership is free.
All Donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Cheque/Money Order payable to CRKSG Inc
Please accept this application for membership to the Canberra Region Kidney Support Group Inc
ABN: 77 396 063 641

Signature:.....

Date:.....

Canberra Region Kidney Support Group Inc
PO Box 5051
GARRAN ACT 2605



Members Dinner 18 March - details page 4