

M.J. MY JOURNEY

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Picking Up the Pieces After Diagnosis

Hearing the words **“You have kidney disease”** can feel like the ground shifts beneath your feet. In one moment, life feels normal. In the next, everything changes.

For many of us, the diagnosis comes with fear, confusion, and a flood of questions. **You may wonder what happens next**, what life will look like, and how much will change. It can feel overwhelming – like you’re suddenly trying to rebuild your life without a clear plan.

The First Emotional Wave

After diagnosis, many people experience:

- Shock
- Fear
- Anger
- Sadness
- Denial



These **feelings are normal**. You’re not just processing a medical condition – you’re processing a life change.

Life Doesn’t Stop – But It Does Shift

- Appointments increase
- Medications begin
- Diet changes
- Energy levels change

*Enjoy
Life*

Kidney Health Corner



Maveric's Tip of the Month

Don't panic — get informed.

Right after diagnosis, fear can make everything feel urgent and overwhelming. Instead of trying to change everything at once, focus on learning your numbers, asking questions, and taking one small step at a time.

Recipe Theme



Comfort Foods Made Kidney-Friendly Ideas for March:



- Herb-baked chicken instead of fried
- Cauliflower mash instead of high-potassium mashed potatoes
- Zucchini noodles instead of traditional pasta
- Sugar-free baked donuts instead of bakery pastries

Ask Maveric: Real Questions, Real Answers



"What was the hardest part after you were diagnosed?"



The hardest part wasn't the diet changes.
It wasn't the appointments.

- It was the fear of the unknown.
- Not knowing how fast things would progress.
- Not knowing if dialysis was coming.
- Not knowing how my life would look a year later.
- What helped me most was learning, asking questions, and finding doctors I trusted. Once I understood what was happening, the fear became more manageable.

SMALL STEPS, BIG WINS CELEBRATE YOUR PROGRESS THIS MONTH:



After diagnosis, celebrate these early victories:

- You reduced salt in one meal
- You checked your blood pressure
- You asked your doctor a question
- You researched kidney health
- You drank water mindfully



INSPIRATIONAL Thought Of The Month

"EVEN BROKEN PIECES CAN BUILD SOMETHING STRONGER THAN BEFORE."

You start learning new words, new routines, and new limits. And slowly, reality sets in. But something else begins to happen too. You start adjusting.

LEARN
AND
GROW

Picking Up the Pieces, One Step at a Time

Rebuilding after diagnosis doesn't happen all at once.

It happens in small moments:

- Learning what foods help your body
- Understanding your lab numbers
- Finding doctors you trust
- Leaning on family and support
- Listening to your body

Every step forward matters.

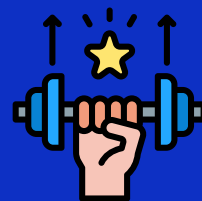


The Hidden Strength You Discover.

What many people don't realize is that a diagnosis also reveals something powerful – strength you didn't know you had.

You learn to:

- Advocate for yourself
- Ask questions
- Protect your health
- Speak up
- Keep going on hard days



And those small actions slowly rebuild your confidence.

In Closing:

You may not have chosen this journey – but you can choose how you rise through it.

MY JOURNEY: PICKING UP THE PIECES

When I first heard the words that my **kidneys were failing and then had failed, I felt like time stopped.**

Even though my lab numbers had been changing, even though I knew something wasn't right – I still wasn't prepared for what it meant. A diagnosis makes everything real. It's no longer "maybe." It's no longer "we'll see." It becomes your life.

I remember sitting quietly afterward, thinking:

- What happens now?
- Will I be okay?
- How much is about to change?
- The fear wasn't loud at first. It was heavy. It sat in my chest. It followed me home.



The Pieces Felt Scattered

Suddenly there were:

- More doctor visits
- New medications
- Diet changes

trust your
JOURNEY

Rebuilding Didn't Happen Overnight

- It happened slowly
- One appointment at a time
- One food change at a time
- One question at a time.



I began to understand my numbers. I learned to speak up. I learned that advocating for myself wasn't being difficult – it was being responsible for my life. That realization changed me.



Final Diary Thought

If you're newly diagnosed and feel like everything is falling apart – I understand. But trust me when I say this: Piece by piece, you will rebuild.

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Good Food Recipes

ITALIAN HERB CHICKEN PARMESAN WITH ZUCCHINI NOODLES
LOW CARB · LOW SODIUM · KIDNEY-FRIENDLY

KIDNEY-FRIENDLY · DIABETIC-FRIENDLY · NO ADDED SUGAR

A PERFECT KIDNEY-FRIENDLY, DIABETIC-FRIENDLY, AND KIDNEY TRANSPLANT FRIENDLY DESSERT



yummy



PROUD
of my
JOURNEY



**Make
Yourself
Proud**



Ingredients (Serves 4)

For the Chicken:

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 5-6 oz each)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup almond flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese (low sodium if available)
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon garlic powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (for baking or light pan-sear)

For the Sauce & Topping:

- 1 cup no-salt-added crushed tomatoes
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried basil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried oregano
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded part-skim mozzarella (low sodium)

For the Zucchini Noodles:

- 3 medium zucchini, spiralized
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper
- Optional: fresh chopped parsley for garnish



Instructions

STEP 1: PREPARE THE CHICKEN

1. PREHEAT OVEN TO 375°F.
2. IN A SHALLOW BOWL, MIX ALMOND FLOUR, PARMESAN, ITALIAN SEASONING, GARLIC POWDER, AND BLACK PEPPER.
3. IN ANOTHER BOWL, WHISK EGG AND WATER.
4. DIP EACH CHICKEN BREAST IN EGG MIXTURE, THEN COAT THOROUGHLY IN ALMOND FLOUR MIXTURE.

STEP 2: COOK THE CHICKEN

1. LIGHTLY BRUSH BAKING DISH WITH OLIVE OIL.
2. PLACE COATED CHICKEN IN DISH.
3. BAKE FOR 20–25 MINUTES, UNTIL INTERNAL TEMPERATURE REACHES 165°F.

STEP 3: ADD SAUCE & CHEESE

1. MIX CRUSHED TOMATOES WITH BASIL, OREGANO, AND GARLIC POWDER.
2. SPOON ABOUT 2 TABLESPOONS SAUCE OVER EACH CHICKEN BREAST.
3. SPRINKLE MOZZARELLA EVENLY ON TOP.
4. RETURN TO OVEN FOR 5–7 MINUTES UNTIL CHEESE MELTS.

STEP 4: PREPARE ZUCCHINI NOODLES

1. HEAT 1 TEASPOON OLIVE OIL IN A PAN OVER MEDIUM HEAT.
2. ADD ZUCCHINI NOODLES AND BLACK PEPPER.
3. SAUTÉ FOR 2–3 MINUTES (DO NOT OVERCOOK TO AVOID EXCESS WATER).

SERVE

PLACE ZUCCHINI NOODLES ON PLATE.
TOP WITH CHICKEN PARMESAN.
GARNISH WITH PARSLEY IF DESIRED.

ESTIMATED NUTRITION (PER SERVING)

- CALORIES: ~350
- PROTEIN: 35G
- CARBS: 8–10G
- SODIUM: CONTROLLED (USING NO-SALT-ADDED SAUCE & LOW-SODIUM CHEESE)



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LINK

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Upcoming Events

Renal Roundtables

Apr 14, 2026 05:30 PM

Contact: Janet Guo

Mesh Louisville

3608 Brownsboro Rd, Louisville KY 40207

Renal Roundtable: Evolving Treatment Paradigms in IgA Nephropathy: An Overview of the Sibeprenlimab Phase 3 VISIONARY Trial

Apr 15, 2026 06:00 PM

Contact: Chelsey Frail, Program Director

Glendoveers

2328 Old Browncroft Blvd., Rochester NY 14625

Phone: 585.598.3963 x370

[Register Now](#)

Finding a Living Donor - MD

Apr 19, 2026 12:00 PM to Apr 19, 2026 05:00 PM

Contact: Nicole Scharf

Dr. Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry

31 S. Green Street, Baltimore MD 21201

[Register Now](#)

Becoming a Living Donor - NY

Apr 26, 2026 01:30 PM to Apr 26, 2026 03:30 PM

Contact: Chelsey Frail

Irondequoit Public Library

1290 Titus Avenue, Rochester NY 14617

Phone: 585-280-8723

[Register Now](#)

Buscando un Donante Vivo - CO

Apr 30, 2026 04:30 PM to Apr 30, 2026 06:30 PM

Contact: Danielle Percival

Bruce Schroffel Conference Center

12505 East 16th Avenue, Aurora CO 80045

Phone: 720-748-9991

Register Now

2026 Great Plates Celebration

Apr 30, 2026 05:30 PM

Contact: Tori Snowden

The Oliver

1321 W 13th Street, Kansas City MO 64102

Register Now

NKF Golf Classic at Hollywood Golf Club

May 12, 2026 11:00 AM

Hollywood Golf Club

510 Roseld Ave, Deal NJ 07723

Register Now

Renal Roundtables

May 14, 2026 05:30 PM

Contact: Janet Guo

Jeff Ruby's Steakhouse - Lexington

101 W Vine St, Lexington KY 40507

Renal Roundtables

May 14, 2026 05:30 PM

Contact: Janet Guo

Jeff Ruby's Steakhouse - Lexington

101 W Vine St, Lexington KY 40507

Long Island Kidney Walk

May 17, 2026 09:00 AM

Contact: Meghan Burns

Belmont Lake State Park

625 Belmont Ave, West Babylon NY 11704

Phone: 212.889.2210 x220

Register Now

First Steps to Transplant - MO

May 17, 2026 12:30 PM to May 17, 2026 03:30 PM

Contact: JoAnna Rogers

Midwest Transplant Network

1900 W 47th Place, #400, Westwood KS 66205

Register Now

2026 Gift of Life Gala - OH

May 28, 2026 05:30 PM

Contact: Megan Haggerty

The Bluestone - Columbus, OH

583 East Broad Street, Columbus OH 43215

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625 Belmont Ave, West Babylon NY 11704

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Trusted Products & Tools I Use

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Dove Sensitive Skin Beauty Bar

Why I Use This Product:

While using immunosuppressants, I started having reactions to certain soaps. This product is gentle, fragrance-free cleansing & supports sensitive skin as part of my daily routine.

[Shop on Amazon](#)



Lysol Disinfecting Wipes

Why I Use This Product:

I use this everywhere. It's important to keep all surfaces clean to avoid getting sick from contamination.

[Shop on Amazon](#)

Trusted Products & Tools I Use

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Mrs. Dash Salt-Free Seasonings

Why I Use This Product:

Using this products helps me stay away from sodium.

[Shop on Amazon](#)



NIVEA Cocoa Butter Body Cream

Why I Use This Product:

My Medications causes dry skin. This products helps with that- and it smells good.

[Shop on Amazon](#)

Trusted Products & Tools I Use

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Palmer's Cocoa Butter Formula Daily

Why I Use This Product:
This keeps my body super soft.

[Shop on Amazon](#)



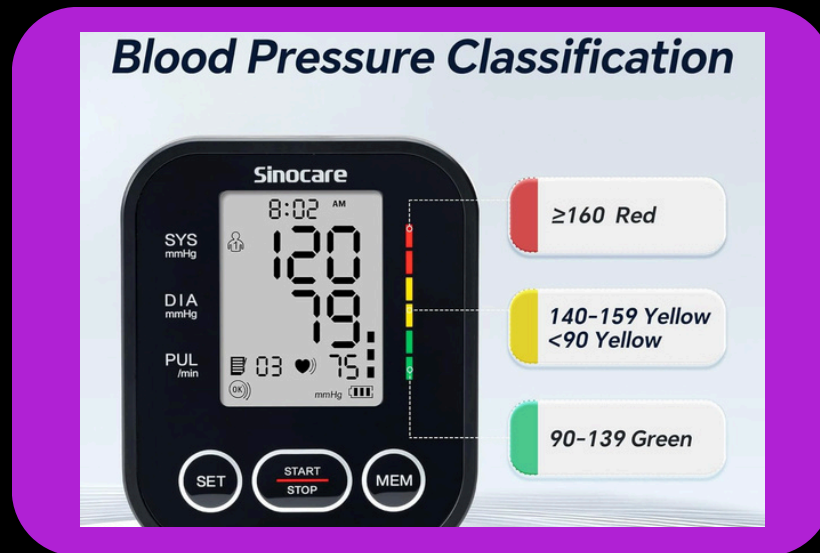
Jergens Original Scent Dry Skin Body

Why I Use This Product:
Sometimes I need to switch up. This product smells good.

[Shop on Amazon](#)

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Blood Pressure Monitor- Adjustable

Why I Use This Product:

I have to take my BP at least 2x a day.

[Shop on Amazon](#)



Smart Scale for Body Weight

Why I Use This Product:

Weighing yourself daily is very important after a kidney transplant.

[Shop on Amazon](#)

Trusted Products & Tools I Use

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Nitrile Gloves, Latex/Powder Free

Why I Use This Product:

I use gloves when I touch anything that can contaminate.

[Shop on Amazon](#)



Diabetes Travel Case with 2 Ice Packs

Why I Use This Product:

This product makes it easy to transport my insulin

[Shop on Amazon](#)

Trusted Products & Tools I Use

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Lunch Box Double Deck Leakproof Insulated Soft

Why I Use This Product:

This is a must have. I used this for dialysis and when I was traveling.

[Shop on Amazon](#)



Lunch Bag Insulated Leakproof Lunch Cooler Bag with Side Pockets and Adjustable

Why I Use This Product:

This is convenient to carry because it's also a back pack

[Shop on Amazon](#)

Trusted Products & Tools I Use

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Twin Blanket- Soft & Warm Fleece

Why I Use This Product:

It's is very cold at dialysis centers. This blanket kept me warm!

[Shop on Amazon](#)



Bluetooth Headphones- Wireless 40 Hours Playtime Foldable

Why I Use This Product:

I use this brand of headphones when I'm exercising or watching movies when I was on dialysis.

[Shop on Amazon](#)

Trusted Products & Tools I Use

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Lysol Disinfectant Spray

Why I Use This Product:

This is a must have. I use this to clean bathrooms when I'm not at home

[Shop on Amazon](#)



Mini Backpack, Stylish, Waterproof

Why I Use This Product:

I use this to transport my wallet, cleaning supplies, & medicines.

[Shop on Amazon](#)