

Speakers Bureau

Renal Dietitians
a dietetic practice group of the
eat right. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics



Melanie Betz (IL)

MS, RD, CSR, FNKF, FAND

melanie@thekidneydietitian.org



Willing to travel

Areas of Expertise: kidney stone prevention, CKD, plant-based diets, online business, social media

Bio: Melanie Betz is a nationally recognized Registered Dietitian who specializes in kidney stones. After discovering a passion for both kidney disease and kidney stone nutrition at the University of Chicago, she founded The Kidney Dietitian, an online platform to educate the world about science-based, personalized kidney nutrition. Today, via her Instagram, Facebook, TikTok & YouTube channels, blog, newsletter and podcast, she reaches over 20,000 patients and healthcare professionals daily.

An avid supporter of dietitian voices in research, she publishes regularly to promote the role of nutrition and registered dietitians in CKD and kidney stone care in peer-reviewed journals and has authored book chapters. She is the current Past-Chair of the Renal Practice Group, Co-Chair for the NKF Spring Clinical Planning Committee, and Past-President of the Illinois Council on Renal Nutrition.



Lauren Begnel (MO)

RDN, CSR, CNSC, LD

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Willing to travel

Areas of Expertise: CKD, ESRD, Renal transplant, bariatric surgery, cystic fibrosis in adults, outpatient and inpatient MNT for a variety of clinical states

Bio: Lauren is a RD specializing in clinical MNT for inpatient and outpatient nutrition and renal nutrition with over 10 years of experience.



Lauren Budd Levy (NJ)

MS, RD, CSR, FNKF

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Willing to travel

Areas of Expertise: dialysis, pre-dialysis, kidney stones, private practice, plant-based eating, IgA nephropathy, meal planning, recipe development

Bio: Lauren, owner of Happy Health Nutrition, LLC, has been working with individuals with kidney disease since 2010. In 2021, she founded Happy Health Nutrition to increase access to nutrition counseling for people living with kidney disease and help prevent the progression of chronic kidney disease (CKD).

Lauren is passionate about supporting individuals at every stage of kidney health, helping them feel more confident navigating CKD while addressing their overall health and wellness. She believes nutrition should support the whole person—not just one diagnosis or health concern. In addition to her work as a nutrition professional, Lauren is a national speaker, recipe developer, and writer, and serves on several advisory boards. Through her work, she is committed to making kidney nutrition more approachable, practical, and empowering.



Amanda Hays (TX)

MS, RDN, LD, CSR

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Willing to travel

Areas of Expertise: chronic kidney disease stages 1-5D, kidney stones, intuitive eating, disordered eating, GI

Bio: Amanda is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist in Austin, TX, with over a decade of experience serving thousands of people across all stages of chronic kidney disease. She graduated with both her Bachelor's and Master's of Science in Nutritional Sciences from Texas Tech University. As the owner of Relish Nutrition Therapy, she specializes in taking the most powerful, research-based medical nutrition therapy recommendations and practically implementing them into real life without sacrificing the joy of food. She regularly works with people who have felt like failures on diets and supports them in making lifelong changes in their health-promoting behaviors to benefit their kidney function. She believes a healthy diet starts with a healthy relationship with food and that everyone with kidney disease deserves access to quality care and support.



Rachael R. Majorowicz (MN)

RD, CSR, LD, FNKF

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Willing to travel

Areas of Expertise: updates in renal nutrition, dialysis, CKD mineral & bone disorders, research in hospital renal diets, nutrition care process, bariatric surgery in kidney disease

Bio: Rachael is a renal dietitian for Mayo Clinic Dialysis Services and an assistant professor of nutrition for the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine. She has over 20 years of experience providing patient care, creating educational materials, writing MNT guidelines and presenting to dietitians, dietetic interns, medical students, nurses, and Nephrology providers. She served on the executive committee of the Renal Practice Group (RPG) of the Academy of Nutrition Dietetics for over 15 years, led the revision of the National Kidney Diet (formerly the National Renal Diet) and serves on the executive committee for NKF- CRN as chair of the Spring Clinical Meetings nutrition program. Rachael is a contributor to online medical information, peer-reviewed journals, and book chapters, including the current revision of the bone and mineral disorders chapter of A Clinical Guide to Nutrition Care in Kidney Disease.



Melissa Mroz Planells (WA)

DCN, MS, RDN

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Willing to travel

Areas of Expertise: nutrition focused physical exam, AI, coaching, quality of life, and malnutrition

Bio: Melissa is an assistant professor and dietetic internship director. She has experience in nutrition therapy for CKD, dialysis, and post-transplant. Melissa completed her doctorate in clinical nutrition from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Melissa splits her time between Illinois and Washington state and is available for virtual or in-person presentations.

"In addition to being able to form a long-term patient-clinician relationship, what I most enjoy about working with persons living with chronic conditions is seeing the impact of making healthy behavior changes on their quality of life."



Rory Pace (CA)

MPH, RD, CSR, FAND, FNKD

rory@pacehouse.com



Willing to travel

Areas of Expertise: hemodialysis, home dialysis, malnutrition, Subjective Global Assessment (SGA), CKD-MBD, quality improvement, dialysis adequacy

Bio: Rory Pace has dedicated her career to Nephrology Nutrition, a field in which she is a leader, educator and patient advocate. Rory earned a Bachelor's degree in Dietetics from the University of California, Davis, and a Master's in Public Health from UCLA. She has been a board-certified specialist in renal nutrition for 20 years. Rory has published and presented on numerous nephrology nutrition topics and is lead author of the 2020 Standards of Practice and Standards of Professional Performance for Nephrology Nutrition. An active volunteer leader, Rory currently serves on the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Board of Directors and is a Past-Chair of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Renal Practice Group. Rory is a fierce advocate for the role of nutrition therapy in kidney disease management.



Annamarie Rodriguez (WI)

MS, RDN, LD, DipACLM,
FAND

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nutritiondirections.com



Willing to travel

Areas of Expertise: plant-based nutrition, CKD/ESRD, health & wellness management, diabetes, weight management, chronic disease prevention, lifestyle management, food for life

Bio: Delivering patient-centered care in a wide variety of settings surrounding chronic diseases for the past 30 years, Annamarie Rodriguez prioritizes prevention through nutrition and wellness. She is a plant-based kidney dietitian providing a holistic wellness approach that embraces nutrition care to sustain life changes to health, well-being, and longevity. She is employed full-time by Pentec Health, providing specialized infusion therapy for dialysis patients experiencing protein-energy malnutrition. She owns Nutrition Directions LLC, providing nutrition consulting services, and is dedicated to serving the community to advocate for health equity to advance preventative measures and decrease the incidence and progression of chronic disease. She has a Master's in Health and Wellness Management, is a Certified Lifestyle Medicine Professional, and is a Licensed Food for Life Instructor. Her philosophy is that each person is on their own personal "food journey" and the direction of nutrition care is personalized, empowering patients to sustainable life well-being.



Edith Yang (CA)

RDN, CSR, CLT, FAND



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healthymissionrd.com

Willing to travel

Areas of Expertise: CKD prevention and management, dialysis, culturally responsive renal nutrition, Asian foods and dietary patterns, private practice, insurance and payment advocacy, patient-centered care

Bio: Edith Yang is a RDN and Board-Certified Specialist in Renal Nutrition with experience in nutrition and CKD. Her background spans skilled nursing, dialysis, and private practice, giving her a broad perspective on supporting individuals throughout the continuum of kidney disease.

Edith is the founder of Healthy Mission Dietitian, Inc., a culturally diverse, insurance-based group practice specializing in chronic disease prevention and management. She is passionate about translating evidence-based recommendations into practical, sustainable strategies that honor each patient's food traditions, health needs, and lived experience.

A national speaker and advocate for MNT, Edith has presented on CKD nutrition, culturally responsive care, and renal private practice. She serves in leadership and policy roles with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics RPG and NKF/CRN. Her work emphasizes earlier nutrition intervention, equitable access to dietitian services, and helping patients protect their kidney health without giving up the foods that connect them to their culture.

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