



KidneyMarch



**Kidney March is an incredible, life changing
3 day, 100 km walk in the fight against kidney disease
happening in Calgary this weekend**

Charity Event Announcement

For Immediate Release

What: Kidney March, a 3 day, 100 km walk to raise awareness for kidney disease and organ donation, in support of The Kidney Foundation of Canada, kicks off on Friday, September 11th.

Why kidney disease: Kidney disease affects 10% of the population. Sometimes hearing 10% doesn't accurately highlight the impact of kidney disease. The impact is that 3.5 million Canadians live with, and die from, this chronic illness. To bring that closer to home - for those with significant loss of kidney function, life is interrupted with specialists' appointments, renal diets, dialysis or transplant treatments, physical and emotional side effects, lost wages, and persistent feelings of being unwell. The Kidney Foundation of Canada provides for kidney disease prevention, lifesaving research and patient support programs.

Why organ donation: Nearly 75% of the over 4,600 Canadians on the wait list for an organ transplant are waiting for a kidney. The Kidney Foundation of Canada builds awareness for organ donation and advocates for processes to optimize organ donation in Canada.

Beneficiary: People living with kidney disease and other chronic illnesses requiring transplant through programs, support and research provided by The Kidney Foundation of Canada.

Date: 3 Days - September 11-13, 2015 **Route:** 100 kms – from Kananaskis to Calgary

More information: www.kidneymarch.ca

Kidney March is the only event of its kind in Canada. Participants spend three days in the picturesque foothills of K-country and Calgary on an inspirational 100 km journey. Now in its 6th year, this local grassroots movement asks participants to do the most they can do in the fight against kidney disease and the appeal for organ donation. The cause is what brings people to the March, but the experience of the weekend is what keeps bringing people back. For friends, family, medical staff and people living with chronic illness, this March becomes their outlet. Somewhere they can make a difference on par with the level of frustration, anger and despair they feel for the burden of illness. It is also their hope. Not only for early detection and a cure for kidney disease, but also for ground breaking advancements in organ transplantation.

Brynn Gawley, a summer student working on The Kidney March Team in advance of this weekend's event, knows the hardship of kidney disease. She shares:

“Four years ago my family noticed my dad’s kidneys start to fail. One month he would be working 12 hour days and going for long bike rides or jogs with me on the weekend, and the next he could only manage two hours of work before he had to leave his shop and come up for a nap. His kidneys were nearing less than 6% function and the amount of toxins in his blood made it extremely difficult for him to find the energy to do many things he would have previously done with ease. It was hard to see my vibrant, fun-loving, and gentle father slowly wither away”.

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Brynn, who has kidney disease herself, adds that she is encouraged by being a part Kidney March.

“Through this opportunity I have met and am still meeting many amazingly inspirational people with stories of their own, each as unique and differentiated as the disease we walk for. Never have I ever had such a close, personal connection to the work I’ve done, nor felt so much like I was actually helping in making a difference. Thank you to The Kidney Foundation for all you’ve done for my family, thank you to Kidney March for being my home away from home, and thank you to the people who are walking this weekend for one reason or another; we’re doing it together, in the same direction.”

Media are invited to join Kidney March, either at Opening Ceremonies on September 11th or Closing Ceremonies on September 13th. Interviews with participants can be arranged along the route any day. Details on the route can be found at <http://kidneymarch.ca/route-maps-and-cheering-stations/>.

The Kidney Foundation encourages anyone who has a kidney connection or would like to take part in a transformative event to join us in the fight against kidney disease by donating to Kidney March 2015 at KidneyMarch.ca. Plus, registration for Kidney March 2016 opens on September 11th. Let the wave of Kidney March, and all the people who make up this great community, embrace you in making the biggest difference you’ve ever made. You can do this.

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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Note: This event announcement will be followed by a media release after Opening Ceremonies on September 11th, 2015 as well as prior to Closing Ceremonies on September 13th, 2015.

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