

Living With Kidney Disease

A Complete Guide to Understanding, Managing, and
Thriving Through Every Stage of the Kidney Journey

Protus M. Kakai

KIDNEY DISEASE

A complete guide to understanding,
managing, and thriving through
every stage of the journey



Medical Information | Practical Advice | Nutrition Guidance
Emotional Support | Treatment Options | Hope & Empowerment

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The information contained in this book is provided for educational and informational purposes only. It is intended to help readers better

understand kidney disease, its management, and the importance of working closely with qualified healthcare professionals.

This book is **not** intended to replace professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. The content should not be used as a substitute for consultation with a qualified physician, nephrologist, nurse, dietitian, pharmacist, or any other licensed healthcare professional.

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The views, experiences, and examples presented in this book are intended to educate and encourage readers. Individual results and experiences will vary.

The author has drawn upon extensive research and personal experience with chronic kidney disease to provide practical guidance and encouragement. However, this book should always be used alongside—not in place of—the advice and care provided by qualified healthcare professionals.

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Living Beyond Kidney Disease

A Practical Guide to Chronic Kidney Disease, Dialysis, Kidney Transplantation and Hope

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First Edition

Published in Kenya

Dedication

This book is dedicated to every person living with kidney disease.

To those attending dialysis sessions while carrying dreams for tomorrow.

To those waiting for a transplant and holding onto hope.

To caregivers who sacrifice their time and energy to support their loved ones.

To kidney donors whose generosity gives others another opportunity at life.

To doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers who continue serving with compassion.

And especially to every kidney patient who wakes up each day and chooses courage over fear.

Your journey matters.

Your life has value.

Your story is still being written.

Author's Note

My journey with kidney disease has taught me that illness is not only a medical experience; it is a human experience.

A diagnosis affects the body, emotions, family, finances, dreams, and future plans.

This book was written to provide information, encouragement, and hope to people walking through the kidney journey.

It is written for:

- Kidney patients seeking understanding and encouragement
- Families supporting loved ones
- Caregivers providing daily assistance
- People wanting to learn about kidney health
- Communities seeking awareness

The purpose of this book is not to replace doctors or medical professionals. Instead, it is meant to help patients become better informed partners in their healthcare journey.

Every person's kidney journey is different. Treatment decisions should always be made together with qualified healthcare providers.

My hope is that these pages remind every reader of one important truth:

Kidney disease may change your circumstances, but it does not remove your value, purpose, or hope.

Acknowledgements

This book exists because of the courage and experiences of many people.

I would like to acknowledge:

The healthcare professionals who dedicate their lives to caring for kidney patients.

The dialysis nurses who provide not only medical care but also encouragement and compassion.

The doctors and researchers working tirelessly to improve kidney treatment.

The families and caregivers who stand beside patients during difficult seasons.

The kidney patients who share their experiences and provide hope to others.

And all those who believe that knowledge, compassion, and support can transform the kidney journey.

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About the Author

Protus M. Kakai

INTRODUCTION

To the Reader

If you are holding this book, chances are that Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) has become part of your life in one way or another.

Perhaps you have recently been diagnosed and are trying to understand what it all means.

Perhaps you are receiving dialysis and wondering what the future holds.

Perhaps you are preparing for a kidney transplant.

Or perhaps you are a spouse, parent, child, caregiver, friend, healthcare worker, or church leader seeking to better support someone living with kidney disease.

Whatever has brought you here, I want to begin with one simple message:

You are not alone.

When I was diagnosed with Stage 5 Chronic Kidney Disease, I found

myself asking many of the same questions you may be asking today.

Why did this happen?

What exactly do the kidneys do?

Will dialysis help me?

Will I ever receive a transplant?

How will I continue working?

How will my family cope?

Will life ever feel normal again?

Those questions did not disappear overnight, but as I learned more about my condition, something important happened.

Fear slowly gave way to understanding.

Understanding gave me confidence.

Confidence helped me become an active participant in my own healthcare rather than simply a passive recipient of treatment.

That journey inspired me to write this book.

This is not a medical textbook written only for specialists.

Neither is it merely a personal memoir.

Instead, it is a practical guide that combines reliable health information with the everyday realities of living with kidney disease.

Throughout these pages, I share not only knowledge but also lessons I have learned through dialysis, clinic visits, laboratory investigations, conversations with healthcare professionals, moments of uncertainty, and countless experiences that have shaped my understanding of this condition.

My goal is not to tell you what every patient should do.

Every person's medical situation is unique, and treatment decisions should always be made with qualified healthcare professionals.

Rather, my hope is to help you ask better questions, understand your treatment more clearly, and feel better equipped to participate in decisions about your own health.

You will discover practical guidance on:

- Understanding Chronic Kidney Disease.
- Dialysis and its different forms.
- Kidney transplantation.

- Nutrition and fluid management.
- Medicines commonly used in CKD.
- Emotional wellbeing.
- Family relationships.
- Financial planning.
- Becoming your own health advocate.
- Preparing for clinic appointments.
- Living with hope.

You will also find practical worksheets, trackers, and planning tools designed to help you organise your treatment and daily life.

These resources are intended to be used—not simply read.

Write in them.

Carry them to clinic appointments.

Review them regularly.

Let them become part of your healthcare journey.

One lesson I have learned is that kidney disease changes many things, but it does not define who we are.

We remain people with dreams, talents, relationships, faith, and purpose.

A diagnosis changes our circumstances.

It does not determine our value.

If this book encourages even one patient to ask an important question...

Helps one caregiver feel better prepared...

Gives one family renewed hope...

Or enables one person to face dialysis
with greater confidence...

Then the effort of writing it will have
been worthwhile.

Thank you for allowing me to walk
alongside you through these pages.

May they educate you.

May they encourage you.

And above all, may they remind you
that even in the midst of Chronic
Kidney Disease, there is still room for
hope, purpose, and a meaningful life.

Welcome to the journey.

Chapter 1

My Story

When Life Changed Forever

*"We also glory in our sufferings,
because we know that suffering
produces perseverance; perseverance,
character; and character, hope." —
Romans 5:3–4*

A Life I Never Expected

There are moments in life that divide our journey into two parts: before and after.

For me, that moment came when I was diagnosed with Stage 5 Chronic Kidney Disease.

Until then, I had dreams, plans, responsibilities, and the normal concerns that most people carry. I never imagined that my kidneys were slowly failing or that one day I would depend on dialysis to stay alive.

Like many people, I knew very little about kidney disease. I had heard the term before, but I never expected it to become part of my own life.

When the diagnosis finally came, it felt overwhelming.

Questions flooded my mind.

Would I survive?

What would happen to my family?

Would I ever work normally again?

How would I afford treatment?

Could my life ever return to what it had been?

I did not have immediate answers.

Learning a New Way of Living

Stage 5 Chronic Kidney Disease changes more than your health.

It changes your daily routine.

Hospital visits become part of your calendar.

Blood tests become familiar.

Medical terms that once sounded foreign suddenly become part of everyday conversation.

Eventually, dialysis became part of my life.

Each session reminded me that modern medicine was helping keep me alive, but it also reminded me that my body could no longer do what healthy kidneys once did naturally.

Dialysis was both a challenge and a blessing.

It required discipline, patience, and adjustments that I had never imagined making.

The Difficult Days

Not every day has been the same.

There have been days of encouragement.

There have also been days of exhaustion.

Sometimes after dialysis I have experienced weakness, nausea, and painful muscle cramps, especially in my hands and fingers.

There have been moments when even simple daily activities felt difficult.

Living with CKD teaches you to appreciate ordinary days because you never know when your energy may suddenly disappear.

The Financial Reality

One of the greatest challenges has not only been the illness itself but also its financial impact.

As someone who is self-employed, I have experienced seasons when my income has not been enough to meet the growing medical expenses.

There have been times when I have had to sell personal assets simply to continue paying for investigations, clinic visits, and other medical needs.

Those decisions have not been easy.

Illness affects far more than the body.

It can affect employment, savings, family plans, and peace of mind.

Yet I have also witnessed extraordinary generosity from people who chose to stand beside me during difficult times.

Their kindness reminded me that hope often arrives through the compassion of others.

The Strength of Family

No one should have to face a serious illness alone.

Throughout this journey, my wife and daughter have been among my greatest sources of encouragement.

Their patience, love, and quiet strength have helped me through many difficult days.

I have also been encouraged by friends, members of our church community, healthcare professionals, and others who have prayed for me, encouraged me, or simply asked how I was doing.

Support does not always come through grand gestures.

Sometimes it comes through a phone call.

A prayer.

A visit.

A kind word.

Or simply the willingness to sit quietly beside someone who is struggling.

Faith That Carried Me

People often ask what has kept me going.

My answer is simple.

My faith in God.

I do not pretend to understand every reason why suffering exists.

There are questions that remain unanswered.

Yet throughout this journey I have come to believe more deeply that God remains present even during seasons of pain.

My faith has not removed every difficulty.

It has given me strength to face them.

It has reminded me that my life still has value, that every new day is a gift, and that hope is never wasted.

Looking Toward Transplant

Today I continue preparing for kidney transplantation.

The process involves many medical evaluations, investigations, and appointments.

It requires patience.

It requires perseverance.

Although the journey is sometimes slow, I continue moving forward one step at a time.

Every completed test is progress.

Every appointment is another step closer to the goal.

Why I Wrote This Book

During clinic visits and dialysis sessions, I met many patients who asked the same questions I had once asked.

Some were frightened.

Some felt confused.

Others simply wanted someone to explain kidney disease in language they could understand.

I realised that many patients need more than medical information.

They need practical guidance.

They need encouragement.

They need hope.

This book was written for them.

It was also written for their families, caregivers, healthcare workers, church leaders, and friends.

If my experiences can help someone feel less alone...

If these pages help one patient understand their condition more clearly...

If they encourage one family to keep hoping...

Then every hour spent writing this book will have been worthwhile.

What I Have Learned

Kidney disease has taught me lessons I might never have learned otherwise.

It has taught me patience.

It has taught me gratitude.

It has taught me to appreciate ordinary moments.

It has taught me to accept help with humility.

Most importantly, it has taught me that our circumstances do not determine our worth.

We are more than our diagnosis.

We are more than our laboratory results.

We are more than the machines that help keep us alive.

We remain people created with dignity, purpose, and hope.

Reflection Questions

1. When did your own kidney journey begin?

-
2. What has been your greatest challenge so far?

-
3. Who has supported you during your journey?

-
4. What gives you hope when life feels difficult?
-

Chapter Summary

In this chapter you have learned:

- ✓ How my journey with Stage 5 Chronic Kidney Disease began.
- ✓ Some of the physical, emotional, and financial realities of living with CKD.
- ✓ The importance of family, faith, and community support.
- ✓ Why this book was written.

As you continue reading, remember this:

Although every kidney journey is different, no one should have to walk it alone. My hope is that this book will become a trusted companion as you learn, adapt, and move forward—one day at a time.

Living With Kidney Disease



*A Complete Guide to Understanding,
Managing, and Thriving Through
Every Stage of the Kidney Journey*

A kidney disease diagnosis can turn your world upside down. This book is here to help you feel informed, prepared, and empowered.

Living With Kidney Disease is a comprehensive and compassionate guide for anyone affected by kidney disease—patients, families, and caregivers. Written in clear, simple language, it walks you through every stage of the journey, from early diagnosis to treatment and beyond.

Inside, you will find:

- ✓ Clear explanations about kidney disease
- ✓ Practical tips for managing daily life
- ✓ Nutrition and diet guidance
- ✓ Treatment and medication information
- ✓ Emotional support and mental wellness
- ✓ Hope, encouragement, and real-life inspiration

*Knowledge gives you power.
Support gives you strength.
Hope gives you life.*

You are not alone on this journey.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Protus M. Kakai is a passionate advocate for kidney health and patient empowerment. Living with kidney disease himself, he understands the challenges, fears, and uncertainties that come with the journey.

He wrote this book to provide hope, knowledge, and practical guidance to help others live better and thrive.

**His mission is simple:
Inspire. Educate. Empower.**

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