

## Jack and Jody



**“Where I can still live and be without pain, that is what I am trying to do.”**

Jack wasn't sure exactly when he made the decision but he knew the what, the why and the how. He knew that he had chosen not to have dialysis even though his kidney failure was end stage. Instead he opted for conservative kidney management (CKM) and knew what he expected from it - that his care team would keep him comfortable.

As for “why?”, Jack wanted quality of life. He described his aim simply, “Where I can still live and be without pain, that is what I am trying to do.” He loved to spend time with friends, look through his photos, and plan family dinners. Despite becoming frail he still loved to walk and had a regular exercise routine in the gym of his assisted living facility. At the age of 85 years, Jack was happy with his independence. When his doctor explained to him the benefits and harms of conservative versus dialysis treatment Jack was clear in his decision for CKM. Having been hospitalized three times over the past year due to falls and arthritis, Jack decided he didn't want any more hospital visits if they could be avoided.

Jack made this decision in the company of his trusted daughter Jody. “Jody analyzes a lot of stuff for me that I wouldn't even think about,” Jack explained. Jody recalls “... the doctor, he said, you know, it's ok to choose that, you don't have to do dialysis.” Through Jack and Jody's journey, this support of their decision was critical as they were questioned repeatedly about their choice whenever they encountered medical staff outside of their kidney care team. “I needed that doctor's support, just to know ok I have taken the right route here with my dad.... Dad never hesitated, he was so at peace with [his decision].”

With the help of the CKM pathway, Jack and Jody knew how to manage his symptoms and how to get help. “I have the best people in the world watching over me,” Jack bragged. Jody used the pathway regularly to help care for her dad. “...every time I had a doubt in my heart, I would check on the conservative kidney management website...and it would just kind of stabilize me and I go ‘ok, this is normal, this is what he is experiencing’ check, check, check, and I would know what to do.”

A month following Jack's death, Jody recalls “This is the end of someone's life but he was finishing well and there was no regret for me.”