NATIONAL KIDNEY FOUNDATION®

IgA NEPHROPATHY (IgAN) VOCABULARY LIST

ACE inhibitor (angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor)
A type of medicine that lowers blood pressure, reduces protein in the urine, and protects the kidneys from more damage.

Albumin
A protein made by the liver that helps keep fluid in your blood vessels. When it shows up in urine, it can be a sign of kidney damage.

Antibodies
Proteins made by your immune system that help fight germs like bacteria and viruses.

ARB (angiotensin receptor blocker)
A type of medicine that lowers blood pressure, reduces protein in the urine, and protects the kidneys from more damage.

Arrhythmia
An irregular heartbeat. Your heart may beat too fast, too slow, or unevenly.

B cell inhibitors (APRIL blockers, APRIL-BAFF blockers)
A type of medicine that calms part of the immune system to slow 'bad IgA' production and reduce protein in urine. They target B cells, which are white blood cells that make antibodies.

Biopsy (kidney biopsy)
Biopsy (kidney biopsy): A procedure where a small piece of kidney tissue is removed and looked at under a microscope to confirm a diagnosis.

Blood pressure
The force of blood pushes against your blood vessel walls. High blood pressure can damage your heart, kidneys, and other organs.

BUN (blood urea nitrogen)
A test that measures the amount of urea nitrogen (a waste from protein breakdown) in your blood. It can help check how your kidneys are working.

Cholesterol
A fat-like substance in your blood. Too much "bad" cholesterol can lead to heart and blood vessel problems.

Chronic kidney disease (CKD)
A condition where your kidneys are damaged and slowly lose their ability to filter waste and fluids from your blood.

Complement inhibitor
A type of medicine that calms part of the immune system to lower kidney inflammation and reduce protein in urine.

Creatinine (serum creatinine)
A waste product from muscles that healthy kidneys remove from your blood. High levels may mean your kidneys are injured.

Dialysis
A treatment that filters waste and extra fluid from your blood when your kidneys can't.

Edema (swelling)
A buildup of extra fluid in your body that causes puffiness in areas like your face, belly, legs, or feet.

eGFR (estimated glomerular filtration rate)
A number from a blood test that shows how much your kidneys can keep up filtering waste. A lower number means lower kidney function.

Endothelin receptor antagonist (ERA)
A medicine that helps relax blood vessels, lowers protein in urine, and protects the kidneys.

Glomeruli
Tiny filters inside your kidneys that clean your blood and remove waste.

HDL cholesterol (high-density lipoprotein)
Called "good cholesterol" because it helps remove "bad" cholesterol from your blood.

Heart failure
When the heart can't pump enough blood to meet the body's needs.

Hematuria
When you have blood in your urine. Sometimes it is visible (like a change in color), but sometimes it is only detected with a urine test.

Hemodialysis
A type of dialysis that uses a machine (an artificial kidney) to clean your blood.

High blood pressure (hypertension)
When the force of your blood against your blood vessels is too strong. It can cause or worsen kidney disease.

Hyperkalemia
When you have too much potassium in your blood. This can affect your heart muscles.

IgA (immunoglobulin A)
A type of antibody that protects your body from infection. In IgAN, these antibodies build up in the kidneys and cause damage.

IgAN (IgAN nephropathy)
A type of kidney disease where antibodies build up in your kidneys and cause damage to your glomeruli (small filters inside your kidneys).

Immune system
The body's defense system that fights infections and helps heal injuries.

Immunosuppressant
A medicine that lowers the activity of your immune system. It can help prevent further kidney damage.

Inflammation
Your body's way of protecting itself when something is wrong. It happens when your immune system sends extra help to fight germs or heal an injury. Usually in IgAN, this is a response to ongoing kidney damage. When inflammation lasts too long, it can cause health problems.

Kidney failure (end-stage kidney disease)
When the kidneys are no longer able to filter your blood or do their other jobs. It's treated with dialysis or a kidney transplant.

Kidney transplant
A surgery where a healthy kidney from a donor is placed into a person with kidney failure.

LDL cholesterol (low-density lipoprotein)
Called "bad cholesterol" because high levels can raise your risk of heart disease.

Metabolic acidosis
A buildup of acid in your blood that can happen when your kidneys are not able to remove natural waste products.

Nephrologist
A doctor who specializes in kidney care and treating kidney disease.

Nephropathy
A word that means kidney damage.

NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs)
Pain relievers like ibuprofen or naproxen that can harm the kidneys when used often or in high doses.

Peritoneal dialysis
A type of dialysis that uses the lining of your belly to filter blood at home.

Preeclampsia
A condition during pregnancy that causes high blood pressure and can harm the kidneys or other organs.

Proteinuria
Having protein in your urine, which is an early sign of kidney damage.

SGLT2 inhibitor
A medicine originally for diabetes that helps lower protein in urine and protect the kidneys and heart, even in people who do not have diabetes.

Steroid (systemic or targeted release)
A medicine that reduces inflammation and calms the immune system. "Targeted release" means it acts mainly in the gut and causes fewer side effects.

Triglycerides
A type of fat in your blood. High levels can increase the risk of heart disease.

UACR (urine albumin-creatinine ratio)
A urine test that measures the amount of albumin (a protein) in your urine. Even a small rise can signal kidney damage.

UPCR (urine protein-creatinine ratio)
UPCR (urine protein-creatinine ratio): A urine test that measures all types of protein (not just albumin) in your urine to check for kidney problems.

Urinalysis
A simple test that checks your urine for signs of health issues like infections, kidney problems, diabetes, and liver disease. It can help detect diseases early for better treatment. Based on the results, more specific testing may be recommended.

For more information, contact the National Kidney Foundation

Toll-free help line: 855.NKF.CARES or email: nkfcares@kidney.org

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