



ARE YOU AT INCREASED RISK FOR CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE? (CKD)

How do you know?

Your doctor or clinic should check to see if you have any risk factors for chronic kidney disease. These include:

- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Obesity
- Family history of kidney failure
- Family and community factors

What should you do?

You should visit your doctor or clinic and get tested. Your checkup should include:

- Checking your blood pressure
- Having a simple test for protein in your urine. Protein is an important building block in your body. Any filtered protein is normally reabsorbed and kept in your body. When your kidneys are damaged, however, protein leaks into your urine.

There are different tests to find protein in your urine. If you have two positive tests over several weeks, you are said to have persistent protein in your urine. This is a sign of chronic kidney disease.

- Having a simple blood test for creatinine, a waste product that comes from muscle activity. Your kidneys normally remove creatinine from your blood.

When your kidneys are damaged, your blood creatinine may build to a high level. The results of your blood creatinine test should be used to estimate your glomerular filtration rate, or eGFR. Your eGFR tells how much kidney function you have.

What are the symptoms?

Most people do not have any severe symptoms until their kidney disease gets worse. However, you may feel like you have:

- Less energy or feel tired
- Trouble thinking clearly
- Less of an appetite
- trouble sleeping
- Dry, itchy skin
- Muscle cramps, especially at night
- Swollen feet and ankles
- Puffiness around your eyes, especially in the morning
- To urinate more often, especially at night







What happens if my test results show I may have chronic kidney disease?

Your doctor will want to pinpoint your diagnosis and check your kidney function to help plan your treatment. The doctor may do the following:

- Calculate your glomerular filtration rate (eGFR), which is the best way to tell how much kidney function you have. You do not need to have another test to know your GFR. Your doctor can calculate it from your blood creatinine level and other factors. Your eGFR tells your doctor your stage of kidney disease and helps the doctor to plan your treatment. (See *chart on next page*)
- Perform an ultrasound or CT scan to get a picture of your kidneys and urinary tract. This tells your doctor if:
 - » Your kidneys are too large or too small
 - » You have a kidney stone or tumor
 - » There are any problems in the structure of your kidneys and urinary tract
- Perform a kidney biopsy, which is done in some cases to check for a specific type of kidney disease, see how much kidney damage has occurred and help plan treatment. To do a biopsy, the doctor removes small pieces of kidney tissue and looks at them under a microscope.

Your doctor may also recommend that you see a kidney specialist who can help manage your care.

5 Stages of chronic kidney disease

	DESCRIPTION	GLOMERULAR FILTRATION RATE (GFR)	KIDNEY FUNCTION
At increased risk	Risk factors for kidney disease (eg, diabetes, high blood pressure, family history, older age, ethnic group)	More than 90	 90-100%
1	Kidney damage (protein in the urine) and normal GFR	More than 90	 90-100%
2	Kidney damage and mild decrease in GFR	60 to 89	 60-89%
3	Moderate decrease in GFR	30 to 59	 45-59%
4	Severe decrease in GFR	15 to 29	 15-29%
5	Kidney failure (dialysis or kidney transplant needed)	Less than 15	 Less than 15%

Can CKD progression be prevented?

Early detection and treatment can often slow or stop the progression of chronic kidney disease. How well your treatment can achieve this goal depends on:

- Your stage of chronic kidney disease when you start treatment. The earlier you start, the better you are likely to do.
- How carefully you follow your treatment plan. Learn all you can about chronic kidney disease and its treatment, and make sure to follow all the steps of your treatment faithfully.
- The cause of your kidney disease. Some kidney diseases are more difficult to manage.

For more information, contact the National Kidney Foundation

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