



## What you need to know about Chronic Kidney Disease

### **What is Chronic Kidney Disease?**

Chronic kidney disease means people who have it will always have it. The kidneys help to remove waste from your body. They help keep a balance of minerals and water in your blood, they also remove drugs and poisons that may be in your blood. Kidneys also are important in helping to keep your blood pressure normal, to make red blood cells and to help keep your bones strong. The two most common causes of kidney disease are diabetes and high blood pressure. Any one can get chronic kidney disease at any age. If you have diabetes or high blood pressure you are at an increased risk for developing kidney damage. Your kidneys can be damaged as the result of hereditary diseases, increased urinary infections, Lupus and/or medications. Complications of chronic kidney disease can often be prevented or decreased by getting treated early.

### **What are the symptoms of kidney disease?**

A lot of times people do not know they have kidney disease until the disease becomes advanced. Some of the symptoms with kidney disease are:

- Feeling tired and have less energy
- Have trouble concentrating
- Have a poor appetite
- Have trouble sleeping
- Have cramping at night
- Have swollen feet and ankles
- Have puffiness around your eyes, especially in the morning
- Have dry, itchy skin
- Need to use the bathroom more often, especially at night time

**What tests are done to tell me whether I have kidney disease?**

Your doctor will do a physical exam and ask questions about your health. Tests included to help the doctor decide if you have kidney disease are:

Blood pressure reading

Urine tests that checks for protein in the urine these tests such as a urinalysis

**What Medications are used for kidney disease?**

- Your doctor will decide which medicine is the best to use based on your symptoms
- It is important to always check with your doctor before taking over the counter medications including herbal remedies when you have chronic kidney disease

*References:* K/DOQI Clinical Practice Guidelines for Chronic Kidney Disease; Evaluation, Classification, and Stratification, 2002. Clinical Practice Guidelines for Chronic Kidney Disease in Adults: Part I. Definition, Disease Stages, Evaluation, Treatment, and Risk Factors 2004, American Academy of Family Physicians 2004:70:869-76.

These Clinical Practice Guidelines are only a general guide and are not intended to replace your doctor's judgment. Always talk with your doctor to be sure you are getting the right examinations, treatment, testing and care recommendations.