National Kidney Month

Recent studies indicate that 26 million American adults suffer from chronic kidney disease (CKD) and that the number is likely to rise unless Americans get serious about prevention. National Kidney Month (March, 2008) and World Kidney Day (March 13) mark a perfect time for responsible adults to begin a kidney-health program by learning about the risk factors for CKD. Primary risks include: diabetes; heart disease; high blood pressure; a family history of kidney disease; and age 60-plus. Secondary risks include: obesity; autoimmune diseases; urinary tract infections and systemic infections.

Help Keep Kidneys Healthy

- Exercise regularly
- Don't overuse over-the-counter painkillers or NSAIDs
- Control weight
- Get an annual physical
- Follow a healthful diet
- Know your family's medical history
- Monitor blood pressure & cholesterol
- Learn about kidney disease
- Don't smoke or abuse alcohol
- Talk to your doctor about getting tested if you're at risk

High Blood Pressure and CKD

Uncontrolled high blood pressure is the second leading cause of kidney failure in the United States and one of the most common problems that can seriously harm the kidneys. Severe high blood pressure can harm kidney function over a relatively short period of time. However, even mild forms of high blood pressure damage kidneys over several years. High blood pressure usually causes no symptoms in its early stages.

- About 65 million Americans, or one out of three adults aged 20 and older, have high blood pressure. Only 63 percent are aware of their condition, 45 percent are being treated and 29 percent had their high blood pressure under control.

- High blood pressure is defined as systolic pressure of 140 or higher or diastolic pressure of 90 or higher.2 However, people who have blood pressures from 120/80 to 139/89 may be at increased risk for developing high blood pressure and should follow healthy lifestyle modifications such as losing excess weight, avoiding salt in the diet and exercising regularly. High blood pressure should not be diagnosed on the basis of a single reading. Initial elevated readings should be confirmed on at least two follow-up visits.3In people with diabetes or chronic kidney disease, blood pressure over 130/80 is considered high.

- Elevated blood pressure usually causes no symptoms. For this reason, it is important to have regular checkups to detect high blood pressure. If high blood pressure is diagnosed, it is equally important to follow the doctor's advice and take medications exactly as prescribed.

- High blood pressure and chronic kidney disease are closely related. Uncontrolled or poorly controlled high blood pressure is the primary diagnosis for about 28 percent of the new cases of kidney failure each year, and 25 percent of all cases of kidney failure.4 It is second only to diabetes as the leading cause of end stage kidney disease – which requires treatment with an artificial kidney (dialyzer) or kidney transplantation to stay alive.

- The prevalence of high blood pressure in African Americans in the U.S. is among the highest in the world. African-Americans develop high blood pressure at an earlier age than white Americans, and their average blood pressures are much higher. More specifically, African Americans are 4.2 times more likely than Caucasians to develop hypertension-related end stage kidney disease. African-Americans also have higher death rates from causes related to high blood pressure. In 2004, for example, the death rates per 100,000 population from high blood pressure were 15.6 for white men, 49.9 for black men, 14.3 for white women and 40.6 for black women.

Wellness Proposals.com

Source: www.kidney.org

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