



PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

Central Michigan District Health Department
"Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities"

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TO: Senior Newsletter

FROM: Shelli Wolfe, Health Educator

RE: Chronic Kidney Disease and Kidney Stones

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More than 26 million American adults have *chronic kidney disease* (CKD) and millions more are at risk and do not know it. Since kidney disease can sneak up without any warning in the way of symptoms, the disease has been labeled a "silent killer" and a "quiet epidemic".

The incidence of kidney failure, or end stage renal disease (ESRD), is rising fast, with more than 546,000 Americans currently receiving treatment. This includes more than 381,000 dialysis patients and 165,000 people with functioning kidney transplants. Of the more than 110,000 Americans currently awaiting organ transplants, there are 87,000 waiting for a kidney.

Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure, accounting for 44 percent of the new cases of CKD. Uncontrolled or poorly controlled high blood pressure is the second leading cause of kidney failure in the country, accounting for 26 percent of all cases.

Each year, more than 88,000 Americans die from causes related to kidney failure. Premature death from cardiovascular disease is higher in adults with CKD compared to adults without CKD. CKD continues to be a major cause of lost physical productivity, as well as more physician visits and hospitalizations among men and women.

Healthy kidneys regulate the body's fluid levels and filter wastes and toxins from the blood. They also release hormones that regulate blood pressure and activate Vitamin D to maintain healthy bones and help with the production of red blood cells. Your kidneys also keep blood minerals in balance (sodium, phosphorus, potassium).

Most people with early CKD have no symptoms, which is why early testing is critical. Unexplained problems with blood pressure and protein in the urine can be indicators of early kidney problems. By the time symptoms appear, CKD may be advanced, and symptoms can be misleading. Symptoms of CKD include: fatigue or weakness, difficult or painful urination, foamy or discolored urine, puffiness around the eyes, swollen face or hands, abdomen, ankles, feet, and an increased thirst or an increased need to urinate (especially at night).

Kidney stones

Kidney stones are small, hard deposits that form inside your kidneys. They often have no definite, single cause. Kidney stones form when the components of urine — fluid and various minerals and acids — are out of balance.

A kidney stone may or may not cause signs and symptoms until it has moved into the ureter — the tube connecting the kidney and bladder. Passing kidney stones can be painful. The pain of a kidney stone typically starts in your side or back, just below your ribs, and moves to your lower abdomen and groin. The pain may change as the kidney stone moves through your urinary tract.

Kidney stones usually cause no permanent damage. Apart from pain medication and drinking lots of water, treatment is often unnecessary. However, treatment may help prevent recurrent kidney stones in people with increased risk.

You may reduce your risk of kidney stones if you drink water throughout the day and choose a diet low in salt and animal protein. Staying away from specific supplements or using medications may be helpful in people who form certain kinds of stones.

For additional information on kidneys, visit www.kidney.org. This article has been brought to you by the Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the residents in Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon Counties.

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