



National Kidney Foundation™ of Illinois

The KidneyMobile™ is the NKFI's statewide prevention campaign for patients, communities and primary healthcare providers. The nation's first traveling chronic kidney disease screening program, the KidneyMobile™'s staff provides free diabetes, high blood pressure (the leading causes of kidney failure) and chronic kidney disease screenings, as well as educational information.

Questions & Answers

Why is the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois (NKFI) conducting free kidney screenings throughout the state?

We know we can make a substantial impact in preventing chronic kidney disease (CKD) with early detection of diabetes and blood pressure and a treatment plan that includes lifestyle changes. 70% of CKD cases are caused by these two conditions, particularly when left untreated and allowed to escalate into more chronic health issues. By taking our traveling prevention services directly into high-risk communities across the state and providing education to both the at-risk individuals and the primary health care providers, we are confident that Illinois families will receive the best possible CKD prevention efforts available.

How is the KidneyMobile™ staffed?

The KidneyMobile™ is staffed with professional registered nurses who use the NKFI's chronic kidney disease assessment program, which screens for diabetes, high blood pressure and chronic kidney disease. We have also partnered with the federally qualified health centers and community hospitals to bring the KidneyMobile™ to health clinics across the state so that we reach individuals most in need first.

How are communities selected?

The KidneyMobile™ is focusing its efforts on communities with the highest at-risk populations. It is important to us that this be a true statewide prevention campaign and will continue to grow the list of communities in the most strategic way possible across Illinois.

How do you follow up with the people you've screened?

After the screening, the NKFI staff follows up with those individuals who presented with abnormal results at the screening to ensure that care and treatment is being sought. We also personally contact by phone anyone with critical abnormal results.

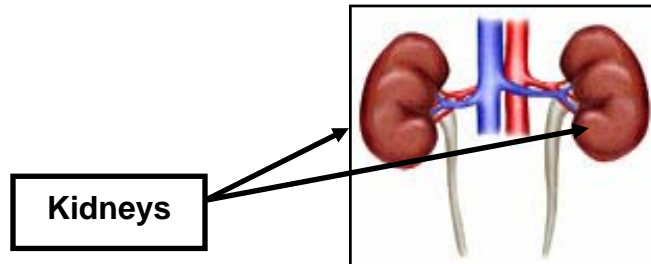
What is your goal for this prevention effort?

Our goal is simple: put early detection services on the road to educate and prevent chronic kidney disease. So many people don't know they have diabetes or hypertension, yet these two conditions account for 70% of all new CKD cases. If these conditions are identified and successfully managed through a treatment plan and lifestyle changes, then we can avoid the escalation of kidney disease. And we can avoid the need for dialysis and the wait for transplantation, which greatly impairs the lives of people with CKD.

Why are my kidneys important?

Kidneys are responsible for:

- Removing waste products and drugs from the body
- Regulating your body water and other chemicals in your blood such as sodium, potassium, phosphorus and calcium
- Releasing hormones into your blood to help regulate blood pressure, make red blood cells and produce vitamin D for strong bones.



What is chronic kidney disease?

Chronic kidney disease is the permanent loss of kidney function, which decreases the body's ability to keep you healthy. As the function of the kidneys decreases, waste builds to high levels in your blood and makes you feel sick.

What treatment options are available if my kidneys fail?

Treatment options are:

Hemodialysis. During treatment, patients must connect to a machine usually located in a dialysis center that will clean the blood. Treatments take about four hours and must be done three times a week.

Peritoneal dialysis where blood is cleaned inside your body through a catheter which is surgically placed inside the abdomen. During this treatment, the lining of the abdomen fills with a cleaning solution that collects the waste. The patient must conduct three to four exchanges to remove the used solution and replace it with the new solution.

Kidney transplantation where a healthy kidney from another person is placed into your body. The kidney may come from a living donor or non-living donor. After the transplant, patients must take medication to suppress the immune system so that the body does not reject the new kidney.

What causes chronic kidney disease?

The two main causes are high blood pressure and diabetes. High blood pressure (or hypertension) occurs when the pressure against the walls of your blood vessels increases. If uncontrolled, high blood pressure can be a leading cause of heart attacks, strokes and chronic kidney disease. High blood pressure can also be a symptom of chronic kidney disease. Diabetes happens when your blood sugar is too high, causing damage to numerous organs in your body, including the kidneys, heart, blood vessels, nerves and eyes.

How can I eat a healthy diet?

Follow the Food Guide Pyramid:

- It offers a guide to healthy food choices for people from age two and up
- Eat a variety of foods from each of the five food groups and stay within the recommended servings.
- Choose foods that are low in fat and sugar. Limit items found at the pyramid tip.
- Choose and prepare foods that are low in salt.

How can I make healthy choices when shopping for food?

Read the Nutrition Facts Food Label, which is found on canned, frozen and packaged foods. This label:

- Lists the items that by law need to be listed on food products.
- Shows the serving size, calories and fat grams in the serving, and how many calories come from fat.

Why is physical activity important?

Combined with a healthy diet, regular physical activity can improve your overall health by helping you to:

- Lose excess weight and keep it off
- Prevent diseases like diabetes, cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure and chronic kidney disease
- Prevent high cholesterol.
- Build strength and endurance.
- Cope with stress and anxiety.

How else can I improve my health?

- Avoid smoking and drug abuse
- Drink a moderate amount of alcohol, if any (If there is a history of alcoholism, avoid drinking).

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