

# Know Your Blood Work: eGFR

## What is eGFR?

Your kidneys filter your blood. They remove wastes and water and make urine. Your doctor can check how healthy your kidneys are. He or she will do a blood test that measures how much blood they are filtering. This test is called eGFR (estimated glomerular filtration rate).

It is important to know your eGFR because you may not be able to feel if your kidneys have been damaged. Checking your eGFR is the best way to tell how your kidneys are working.

## How can I get my eGFR?

Your doctor will test your blood for creatinine. Creatinine is a waste that comes from your muscles. Your doctor will use your creatinine result, your age, your sex and your race (see back) to figure out your eGFR. Creatinine may vary from day to day. For the best results, you might need your eGFR tested again in a few months.

## Is there anyone this test won't work for?

Yes! This test is very good, but it's not for everyone. This test is NOT for you if you're:

- Younger than 18
- Older than 70
- Pregnant
- Very Overweight
- Very Muscular
- Have another serious illness

If any of these describe you, talk to your doctor about other tests.

## What does my eGFR mean?

Use the chart below to see what your eGFR may mean.

*Based on the National Kidney Disease Education Program's Suggestions for Laboratories, available at [www.nkdep.nih.gov/resources/laboratory\\_reporting.htm](http://www.nkdep.nih.gov/resources/laboratory_reporting.htm).*

| eGFR Result  | What It May Mean  |
|--------------|---|
| 60 or More   | See Below*  |
| 30 to 59     | Moderate Kidney Damage                                      |
| 15 to 29     | Severe Kidney Damage  |
| Less than 15 | Kidney Failure (Dialysis or transplant may be needed soon.) |

### \*If your eGFR was 60 or MORE...

Your doctor will look for other signs to make sure you don't have early kidney disease. Your doctor may also look at:

- Your urine (for protein or blood)
- Your blood (for wastes and toxins)
- Your blood pressure
- Your health history
- Your family's health history

**Help protect your kidneys by eating healthy, staying active and seeing your doctor regularly.**

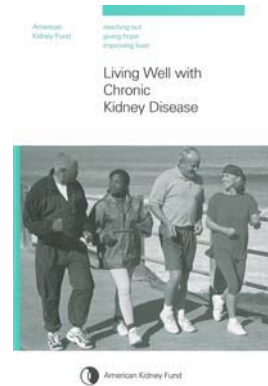
**Over →**

## If your eGFR was LESS than 60...

Talk to your doctor soon. If this was your first eGFR test, talk to your doctor about when you should be tested again. Your doctor will watch to see if your eGFR is **less than 60 for 3 months or more.**

If your doctor tells you that you have chronic kidney disease, you should:

- Control any diabetes
- Control any high blood pressure
- Control cholesterol
- Treat any health problems caused by kidney disease, like bone disease and anemia (not enough red blood cells)
- Don't use tobacco
- Exercise regularly
- Talk to your doctor about your diet and medicines
- Order *Living Well with Chronic Kidney Disease*, a free booklet from the American Kidney Fund. To order, call our HelpLine at 866-300-2900.



## If you are African American...

...your eGFR is calculated a little differently. This is because African Americans have more muscle mass than other groups.

Some doctors and labs do not use your race when finding your eGFR. Ask your doctor or lab if they used your race when they did your eGFR. **If they did not, you will need to multiply your eGFR result by 1.2.**



- Example:**
- Norma is a 58 year-old African American woman.
  - Her doctor tells her that the lab did not consider her race.
  - Her lab results showed that her eGFR was 50.

Norma uses a calculator to multiply the eGFR from her lab results by 1.2.

$$50 \times 1.2 = 60$$

**60 is Norma's correct eGFR.**

At her next visit, Norma will ask her doctor when she should be tested again.

## Where can I learn more?

You can learn more by talking to your doctor.

For more information about eGFR and chronic kidney disease, call our toll-free HelpLine at 866.300.2900 or visit our website at [www.kidneyfund.org](http://www.kidneyfund.org).