

## Healthy Living Newsletter

March / April 2019

A MedWatch publication to keep you healthy and informed.

Be sure to click on the images and header hyperlinks to take you to valuable websites for additional information!

**LOVE** Your Kidneys!

### Nutrition Corner

Show your kidneys



#### KIDNEY-HEALTHY DIETS!

If you have, or are at risk of kidney disease, talk to your health care provider about the best diet for your individual needs. Here are some useful guidelines to help you develop your own kidney-friendly diet.

##### Lighten up on Protein.

Your body uses protein to build and repair tissue. A damaged kidney has difficulty clearing waste products from the metabolism of protein. Your doctor may suggest cutting back how much protein you eat.

##### Shake off the Salt.

It is often recommended limiting sodium to less than 2,000 mg per day. Excess sodium can be harmful for individuals with kidney disease. Damaged kidneys cannot eliminate excess sodium and fluid from your body, causing blood pressure to rise. This further damages kidneys resulting in even more fluid and waste build up in the body.

##### Potassium: The "Other" Salt.

Damaged or failing kidneys cannot remove excess potassium, so the level builds up in the body. High potassium in the blood is called hyperkalemia, which may occur with advanced stages of chronic kidney disease (CKD). Some effects of high potassium are nausea, weakness, numbness & slow pulse.

- Go fresh, NOT prepared
- Spices "YES" - Salt "NO"
- Drain & rinse canned foods
- Choose "Low Sodium" under 20% of daily allowance
- Eat small portions of protein
- "Don't Fry" - grill, bake or sauté instead
- Use nonstick pans and a little olive oil
- Trim excess fats off before cooking



### Taking Control of Your Health

#### Our Remarkable Kidneys . . .

##### What Can Go Wrong With Them!

We all know that our kidneys play a vital role in our overall health, but how many know exactly what these organs are responsible for doing? Think of your kidneys as the custodian of your body – clearing toxins from your bloodstream and removing them safely from your body. These two fist-sized, bean-shaped organs, located just below the rib cage, are responsible for essential functions that keep our blood healthy, allowing the body to function properly. These powerful chemical factories perform the following vital functions:

- Regulate water and the balance of the body's fluids.
- Remove waste products from the body.
- Remove drugs from the body.
- Release hormones that regulate blood pressure, calcium balance and other bodily functions.
- Produce an active form of vitamin D that promotes strong, healthy bones.
- Control the production of red blood cells.

Clearly, good kidney health is important to our well-being. Yet there are several forms of kidney disease that can jeopardize good kidney health. They include:

**Diabetes** is a disease in which your body does not make enough insulin, important to the regulation of blood sugar. Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney disease.

**High Blood Pressure** is a common cause of kidney disease and other complications such as heart attacks and strokes. When high blood pressure is controlled, the risk of complications such as chronic kidney disease is decreased.

**Glomerulonephritis** is a disease causing inflammation of the kidney's tiny filtering units which leads to a progressive loss of kidney function.

**Urinary Tract Infections** occur when germs enter the urinary tract. Infections most often affect the bladder, but they sometimes spread to and damage the kidneys.

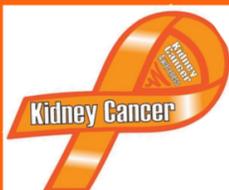
**Drugs and Toxins** can also cause kidney problems. Using large numbers of over-the-counter pain relievers for a long time may be harmful to the kidneys.

Ask your physician about two simple tests to check for kidney disease and monitor kidney health.

- 1) **Urine Test.** The Albumin Creatinine Ratio estimates the amount of albumin protein present in urine. A healthy kidney will not pass albumin into your urine.
- 2) **Blood Test.** The Glomerular Filtration Rate (GFR) tells how well your kidneys are working to remove wastes from your blood.

If you have questions about your kidney health, consult your physician or contact your MedWatch Total Lifestyle Coach.

For information on the web, visit the National Kidney Foundation at: [https://www.kidney.org/news/monthly/Focus\\_KidneyMonth](https://www.kidney.org/news/monthly/Focus_KidneyMonth)



For more information on kidney health, visit the following websites:

<https://www.kidney.org/>

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/kidney-disease>



### Controlling Kidney Disease - *Risk Factors and Prevention*

1 in 3 American adults is at risk for kidney disease. It often has no symptoms and can go undetected until very advanced. Know the risk factors for kidney disease and actively monitor your kidney health.

- 1) Diabetes 2) High Blood Pressure 3) Family History of Kidney Failure 4) 60 or older.

While we have no control over our family history or age, there are strategies that can counteract the effects of other risk factors. If you are at risk for diabetes, high blood sugar is of particular concern as it can lead to kidney damage, both to the blood vessels that feed the kidneys and to the part of the kidneys that filters the blood. Similarly, high blood pressure and high cholesterol can damage blood vessels, essentially putting pressure on the kidneys and causing them to work harder than normal. Strategies for controlling these risk factors include monitoring blood sugars, regular exercise, increased fiber in your diet, good hydration, losing weight, and increasing your quality of sleep. Kidney disease also increases the chances of having heart disease and stroke. Early detection and treatment can slow or prevent the progression of kidney disease.

*Simple ways to support kidney health, fight kidney disease, kidney stones & other complications:*

- |                        |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| ♥ Healthy food choices | ♥ Control blood pressure     |
| ♥ Exercise             | ♥ Decrease salt intake       |
| ♥ Limit alcohol        | ♥ Quit smoking               |
| ♥ Get enough sleep     | ♥ Stress-reducing activities |

[https://www.kidney.org/news/monthly/Focus\\_KidneyMonth](https://www.kidney.org/news/monthly/Focus_KidneyMonth)

### Super Foods for Super Kidneys!

The antioxidants beta-carotene, carotenoids and flavonoids in these superfoods help make them excellent choices for a kidney healthy diet.

- |               |                    |
|---------------|--------------------|
| ✓ Cauliflower | ✓ Cabbage          |
| ✓ Blueberries | ✓ Skinless Chicken |
| ✓ Red Grapes  | ✓ Bell Peppers     |
| ✓ Sea Bass    | ✓ Onions           |
| ✓ Egg Whites  | ✓ Cranberries      |
| ✓ Garlic      | ✓ Pineapple        |
| ✓ Olive Oil   | ✓ Turnips          |
| ✓ Bulgur      | ✓ Radishes         |

Click on the images below for links to valuable websites:

<https://www.nwkidney.org/living-with-kidney-disease/recipes/>

[https://www.kidney.org/sites/default/files/docs/kidney\\_cookbook\\_lr.pdf](https://www.kidney.org/sites/default/files/docs/kidney_cookbook_lr.pdf)

<http://www.kidneyfund.org/kidney-disease/chronic-kidney-disease-ckd/kidney-friendly-diet-for-ckd.html>

Your MedWatch Total Lifestyle Coach (TLC) is your health advocate and acts as your personal GPS to help navigate the complex healthcare roadmap.

Call your TLC at (800) 386-5475 for personalized tools and resources to help you maintain your health.