



# spotlight on health

## Check Out Your Kidneys

(NAPSA)—A few simple steps may prolong and improve millions of lives. According to recently released guidelines by the National Kidney Foundation (NKF), more than 20 million Americans have chronic kidney disease and another 20 million are at risk. The foundation urges all Americans—especially those at risk—to get tested for kidney disease.

“Chronic kidney disease usually causes no symptoms until it reaches an advanced stage, but simple tests can be done to detect kidney disease early,” said Brian J.G. Pereira, M.D., president of NKF. “If caught early enough, chronic kidney disease can be treated to prolong or even prevent associated complicating factors, such as cardiovascular disease, anemia or bone disease.”

According to the new guidelines, supported by Amgen Inc., it’s important that people visit their doctor or a clinic to find out if they could be at increased risk for chronic kidney disease. Anyone can get chronic kidney disease, but some people are more likely than others to develop it. People in high-risk groups include:

- People with diabetes or those with a family history of diabetes;
- Those with a family history of chronic kidney disease;
- Those with high blood pressure or family history of high blood pressure; and
- African Americans, Hispanics, Pacific Islanders and Native Americans.



**For people at risk for chronic kidney disease, it’s important to visit the doctor and get tested as soon as possible.**

The NKF recommends three simple tests for anyone who is at increased risk: blood pressure, urine tests to check for protein and a blood test to estimate the level of kidney function.

Patients who test positive for chronic kidney disease can begin a treatment plan and lifestyle adjustments that may include losing weight, exercise, smoking cessation and low protein or low salt diets.

People at increased risk, but whose test results turn out normal, may find their doctors will want to re-check them at least once a year. The doctors may also advise their patients how to reduce the risk of developing kidney disease, by making lifestyle changes such as increased exercise or diet adjustments.

For more information about chronic kidney disease, call the National Kidney Foundation at (800) 622-9010.



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*Note to Editors: March is National Kidney Month, but this story can be run at any time.*