

## Simple Urine Test Could Save Your Life

(NAPSA)—When was the last time you peed in a cup? For most Americans, the answer is not recently enough, according to the National Kidney Foundation (NKF). Although one in nine American adults—more than 20 million people—have kidney disease, most don't know it. Another 20 million Americans are at an increased risk of developing kidney disease. But that simple urine test can detect kidney disease years before symptoms occur.

The National Kidney Foundation is teaming up with Bayer Diagnostics to offer a free brochure on urinalysis.

“This inexpensive urinalysis test is rarely included in routine medical checkups,” says William F. Keane, MD, NKF president. “But early detection is critical because it allows for early treatment, which may prevent the disease's progression. Although someone may have kidney disease for years, there might not be any symptoms until it reaches an advanced stage, leaving few options for treatment. Untreated, many forms of kidney disease can lead to kidney failure, requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant to survive.”

A urinalysis can be done during a routine visit to the doctor or clinic. A small sample of urine provides information regarding the kidney's overall health. One strong indicator of kidney problems is an excess amount of protein in the urine. To test for this, doctors use a chemically treated strip, or dipstick, that changes color when dipped into the urine. A ratio urine test estimates the amount of protein excreted in the urine in a day and avoids the need to collect a 24-hour urine sample.

“Healthy kidneys filter wastes and excess fluid from the body while retaining what it needs, such as proteins—our bodies' building blocks,” said Dr. Keane. When the kidneys begin to fail, protein is no longer retained properly and it



**Americans should have regular urinalysis tests to check for kidney disease.**

begins to appear in the urine.

A urinalysis is particularly important for people who have an increased risk of developing kidney disease. You're at risk if you:

- have diabetes
- have high blood pressure
- are a senior citizen
- have a family history of kidney disease
- are African American, Hispanic, Asian American or American Indian.

A urinalysis can also detect the following potential problems:

- Red blood cells may signal chronic kidney disease, kidney stones, infection, bladder cancer or a blood cell disorder such as sickle cell disease.
- Glucose (sugar) is usually a sign of diabetes.
- Bacteria and white blood cells are signs of infection, vaginal or bladder disease.
- Abnormal acid levels may indicate chronic kidney disease or other problems such as kidney stones or urinary infections.

To receive the brochure, contact the National Kidney Foundation at (800) 622-9010 or [www.kidney.org](http://www.kidney.org).