

Kidney Health (Non-Dialysis) Self-Management Plan

Chronic kidney disease is the slow loss of kidney function over time.

- A yearly blood test measuring your kidney function is recommended
- If Diabetic, check for protein in your urine (microalbuminuria test)
- If Diabetic, keep your blood glucose level under control
- Keep your blood pressure under control
- If you smoke, take steps to quit!
- Eat a healthy, low salt diet.
- Avoid alcohol or limit your alcohol intake
- Exercise-follow recommendations set by your health care provider. **If you have shortness of breath upon exertion, talk with your health care provider**
- Tell your health care provider about ALL medications you are taking, including over the counter medicines, vitamins, or herbal supplements.
- Do not stop medicines without first checking with your medical or mental health provider
- If you do stop medicines, check with your doctor prior to restarting

Green Flags – All Clear

What this means ...



If you have:

- Potassium level in your blood is between 3.5-5.4
- No symptoms listed in the yellow or red flags
- Your blood pressure is within the range set by your health care provider
- Your cholesterol levels are within the range set by your health care provider
- You take medicines as prescribed

- Good work!

Keep up the good work!

Yellow Flags – Caution

What this means ...



If you have:

- Potassium level in your blood is between 5.4-6.
- Notice blood in your urine
- Dark brown urine or cloudy urine
- Foamy urine noticed in the toilet
- Swelling of your hands and feet
- Increased weakness, shortness of breath, or tiredness
- Increased blood pressure, chest pain, or shortness of breath with exertion.
- Nausea, vomiting or loss of appetite
- Bruise easily
- Skin itching
- Lightheadedness with standing

- Your Potassium level is in the caution area. Discuss with nutritionist what are high potassium foods to avoid
- You could have a kidney infection
- You could have kidney disease or the kidney disease is getting worse
- You may need your diuretic (water pill) dose adjusted

Call your doctor, consulting nurse, or health care provider if symptoms do not improve.

Name:

Number:

Instructions:

If you notice a Yellow Flag, work closely with your health care team.

Red Flags – Stop and Think

What this means ...



If you have:

- Change in level of consciousness; extreme sleepiness or difficulty awakening
- Severe fatigue
- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing and decreased response to your diuretic (water pill)
- Severe nausea and vomiting
- Little or no urine output
- A very slow heart rate (less than 50 beats/minute or a very rapid heart rate (more than 120 beats/minutes)
- Severe bleeding (from any source)
- Muscle weakness
- Seizures

- Your potassium level could be too high; 6.0 or higher
- Kidney disease is getting worse

If possible, notify your health care provider's office.

Name:

Number:

Follow these instructions: CALL 9-1-1

If you notice a Red Flag, CALL 911. Emergency!

Kidney Fast Facts

- Kidneys functioning is vital to your overall health and wellness
- Your kidneys **clean your blood from waste**, they **help keep your internal balance**, **keep mineral balance**, **retain essential elements** needed by your body, **help to control your blood pressure**, **help to keep your bones strong and help to produce red blood cells**.
- Every 30 minutes, your kidneys filter all the blood in your body, removing waste and excess fluid. **Build-up of waste can lead to fatigue, weakness, and difficulty thinking.**
- 1 in 3 Americans is at high risk for developing kidney disease.
- The two leading causes of kidney disease are high blood pressure and diabetes. Other major **risk factors** are having a family history of kidney failure and being age 60 or older
- Some **additional risk factors** include having kidney stones, smoking, obesity and heart disease
- 1 in 9 Americans has kidney disease, and most do not know it
- Early detection and treatment can slow or prevent the progression of kidney failure
- African Americans are three times more likely to experience kidney failure
- Hispanics are 1 ½ times more likely to experience kidney failure
- Most people have 2 kidneys, but it is possible to live with only one
- Once the kidneys fail, dialysis or kidney transplant is required

What can you do?

- Have any lab tests; including blood and urine tests as order by your health care provider.
- Keep your blood pressure in the range set by your health care provider.
- If you have diabetes, keep your blood glucose under control. Let your health care provider know if you are starting to experience low blood sugars.
- Make steps to eat a healthy diet, including one that is low in fats.
- Cut back on salt intake. Aim for less than 1,500 mg of SODIUM unless otherwise directed by our health care provider.
- **Remember**-The important steps you take to keep your kidneys healthy will help the rest of your body maintain overall health and wellness. Talk to your health care provider to find out the steps that are right for you!

Aging and Disability Services

Aging and Disability Services (ADS)—the Area Agency on Aging for King County— plans, coordinates, and advocates for comprehensive services for older adults, family caregivers, and people with disabilities throughout Seattle and King County.

For more information, call 1-844-348-5464 or e-mail info@communitylivingconnections.org



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