

# STAGE 3 CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

**Don't panic!**

**We explain what CKD Stage 3 means for you  
and how you can keep your kidneys healthy.**



**RUN BY PATIENTS FOR THE BENEFIT OF PATIENTS**



**HELPLINE 0800 169 09 36**

[www.kidney.org.uk](http://www.kidney.org.uk)



# **STAGE 3 CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE**

Stage 3 chronic kidney disease (CKD) sounds alarming. However, it rarely causes symptoms and does not have a big impact on quality of life. And, with changes in lifestyle and treatment from your GP, it is possible to keep your kidneys healthy.

Very few people with Stage 3 CKD have a disease of the kidney and the earlier this can be detected the better. But, it is really very rare to go on to develop kidney failure so that people need dialysis or kidney transplant.

Nevertheless, Stage 3 CKD does need to be taken seriously. In particular, it is very important to take care of the conditions that may contribute to kidney damage (e.g. diabetes, high blood pressure), as well as any risk factors for cardiovascular disease (for example high cholesterol, smoking).

## **ARE MORE PEOPLE BEING DIAGNOSED WITH KIDNEY DISEASE?**

These days people are more likely to be told they have CKD Stage 3 because of new medical definitions that were introduced some years ago. Kidney disease is now divided into five stages according to estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) or how many millilitres of water the kidneys can filter in one minute (ml/min).

eGFR is calculated based on your age, sex and the levels of waste product called creatinine in your blood. The new definition for CKD is kidney damage shown by a reduction in eGFR to less than 60ml/min for at least three months. Stage 3 kidney is an eGFR 30-59 ml/min, and it can be further divided into Stage 3A (45-59 ml/min) and Stage 3B (30-44 ml/min).

The rise in the number of people being told they have CKD is also related to our ageing population. CKD occurs more commonly in older people. Whether this is due to normal ageing or just due to the way eGFR is calculated, is rather unclear.

But it is wise to know your eGFR if you are aged over 60 years because it tells you if you need to get tested for risk factors that might be contributing to kidney damage. These include high blood pressure, diabetes, being overweight, protein in your urine or high cholesterol. A combination of these risk factors may also lead to cardiovascular disease, which also contributes to the risk of CKD.

## **HOW CAN I KEEP MY KIDNEYS HEALTHY?**

The kidneys are important because they remove toxic waste products and excess water and salts from the blood and help to control blood pressure. They produce erythropoietin, which stimulates the production of red blood cells from the bone marrow. The kidneys also keep calcium and phosphate in balance for healthy bones and maintain blood in a neutral (non-acid) stage.

The key to making sure your kidneys can do these jobs is to have a healthy lifestyle and avoid becoming overweight, which increases the risk of diabetes. It's also important to know your blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels which, if high, should be adequately treated.

GPs keep a register of people with Stages 3, 4 and 5 CKD. This is important because it allows your doctor to see you regularly to make sure that CKD risk factors are being controlled.

At your regular review you will be asked if you have any symptoms and you will be asked about your medications to make sure you are taking them regularly and not getting any side effects. You will also have tests to monitor your kidney function and general health. It is usually recommended that people get a home blood pressure monitor so they can monitor blood pressure to make sure it is well controlled.

Your regular review is a good opportunity to ask any questions. The bottom line is that looking after your kidneys is a partnership between you and your doctor. What you do and the way you live your life is just as important, if not more important, than which drugs are prescribed for you.

## **KEEPING YOUR KIDNEYS HEALTHY**

- Stop smoking (smoking damages the fine blood vessels in your kidneys)
- Avoid taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen (they can damage the kidneys if used long term)
- Maintain a healthy weight and eat a healthy Mediterranean diet, including plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables, salads and fish.
- Avoid too much red meat, cakes, pies, pastries, puddings, sweets and concentrated dairy products (e.g. condensed milk, evaporated milk, whey protein)
- Cut down on salt, especially avoid salty, processed foods (e.g. ready meals, processed meats and ready-made sauces)
- Aim for moderate physical activity twice a day (e.g. walking a mile in 20 minutes or taking 10,000 steps a day. People who have a step-counter walk, on average, over 2,500 steps more than those who don't)
- Drink alcohol in moderation (no more than 14 units a week)
- Have your annual flu jab and ask about the pneumonia vaccination at your GP's surgery
- Make sure you have a healthy blood pressure and blood cholesterol; if not, talk to your GP about treatment



**To talk about your diagnosis of Stage 3 Chronic Kidney Disease  
you can speak to a trained Helpline Advisor on our free to call  
telephone number**

**0800 169 0936**





*The National Kidney Federation cannot accept responsibility for information provided. The above is for guidance only. Patients are advised to seek further information from their own doctor.*

© 2020-2030 National Kidney Federation (NKF)  
All rights reserved

*Written June 2023*



**The NKF – the largest Kidney Patient Charity in the UK**

A FEDERATION OF MORE THAN FIFTY PATIENT CHARITIES, SUPPORTING KIDNEY PATIENTS & CARERS

Registered Office: **The Point, Coach Road, Shireoaks, Worksop, Nottinghamshire, S81 8BW**

**Registrations:** Registered in England & Wales, Charity Number: **1106735**, Scottish Charity Number: **SC049431**.

Company Number: **5272349**. Give as You Earn contributions number: **CAF GY511**.