

Chronic Kidney Disease and Anemia

Anemia is a condition in which the body does not have enough red blood cells. Red blood cells deliver oxygen from your lungs to all body organs and tissues.

Why is anemia important to my CKD?

Anemia complicates your condition. Diseased kidneys do not produce enough erythropoietin (EPO), a hormone that tells your bone marrow to make more red blood cells.

Will I notice symptoms?

Yes, though they may be the same as other chronic conditions:

- Tiredness
- Lack of energy
- Poor appetite
- Problems sleeping
- Dizziness or “fuzzy” thinking
- Rapid heartbeat
- Shortness of breath
- Depression
- Pale complexion

What causes anemia?

There could be many reasons:

- Chronic diseases (such as CKD)
- Too little iron, folic acid or vitamin B12 in your body
- Loss of blood
- Poor diet
- Infections or diseases that destroy blood cells

What can I do?

Talk with your doctor and dietitian. Treatment depends on the reason for the anemia. You might be asked to:

- Take supplements of iron, folic acid or vitamin B12
- Take medicine to increase the production of red blood cells
- Consider diet options