

top 10 tips

For Chronic Kidney Disease Patients

You have been diagnosed with chronic kidney disease (CKD). You are not alone, more than 26 million people in the United States have this disorder. Diabetes and hypertension are the most common causes. Even though there is no cure for CKD, we want to make you aware of **ten** things that may help your kidneys last longer – sometimes even for years:

- 1. Control high blood pressure.** Controlling high blood pressure *is proven to be the most important treatment for slowing kidney damage*. Your blood pressure should be less than 120/80 if you have excess protein in your urine, otherwise it should be less than 130/80.
- 2. Discuss with your doctor medications that block the renin-angiotensin system.** These medicines not only control blood pressure, but they also benefit your kidneys by lowering the protein in your urine. They are a *proven* treatment for slowing kidney damage.
- 3. Lower your cholesterol.** Kidney damage can increase the amount of “bad” cholesterol called LDL, and this is associated with a faster progression to kidney failure. Lowering cholesterol will *almost certainly* slow kidney damage.
- 4. Stop smoking.** A very good study revealed that smoking cessation slows kidney damage by 30%.
- 5. Follow a weight-loss diet, if you are overweight, and a protein-restricted diet.** Obesity may cause increased protein in the urine and promote damage to the kidneys. Weight loss *is proven* to be effective in slowing kidney damage. Even if you are not overweight, we may suggest a modest protein-restricted diet that *is proven* to slow kidney damage.
- 6. Avoid pain pills such as Advil[®], Aleve and Motrin[®].** These medicines are known as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory pills, and they *are proven* to potentially harm the kidneys.
- 7. Neutralize excess acid.** Damaged kidneys cannot get rid of the body’s acid normally. It is *not yet proven* in humans that neutralizing your acid will slow kidney damage, but it *is proven* to prevent bone damage and muscle wasting.
- 8. Take vitamin D.** Damaged kidneys do not produce enough active vitamin D. It is *not yet proven* that vitamin D supplements will slow kidney damage, but we think that it might. Vitamin D also plays an important role in supporting healthy bones and fighting infections.
- 9. Control phosphorus levels.** Phosphorus plays an important role in supporting healthy bones, but when you have kidney damage the phosphorus levels become too high. It is *not yet proven* that decreasing phosphorus levels slows kidney damage, but it will certainly help prevent bone damage. A diet and/or medication may be prescribed.
- 10. Treat anemia.** Damaged kidneys do not produce enough of a specific hormone, erythropoietin (EPO), which normally instructs your body to build blood. It is *not yet proven* that giving this hormone will slow kidney damage, but it will improve your energy, your heart and probably your lifespan!

Questions? Please talk with your doctors at Renal Specialists of Houston.