

Creating your CKD Management Plan

If you are diagnosed with chronic kidney disease, or CKD, you can take steps to help prevent more damage to your kidneys. This is called a CKD management plan. You'll create your plan together with your health care team. It may include diet, exercise, medications and regular checkups.. all with the goal of healthy laboratory results.

"CKD management plans really is that idea of frequent follow ups and laboratory tests and really the management plan revolves around those two things." - Dr. Aaron Dall Nephrologist/Kidney Specialist

Rogelio Garcia knows the importance of follow up appointments and lab tests. With End Stage Renal Disease, he meets regularly with everyone on his health care team.

"The nephrologist, the dietitian, the social worker would come around, and discuss how I've been doing on dialysis, what kind of trends are they seeing and try and tweak my current regimen." – Rogelio, Patient

Your management plan will be based on your specific needs and what stage your kidney disease is in.

"The whole team takes part in that and the patient is part of the team and if they choose to include their family and friends in that team that's really good." – Pamela, Social Worker

"The patient has to be the most important person in the care team because if you can't make your patient understand why it's important for them, you have to try again. When the patient is empowered they do better. Their outcomes are better." - Judy Geissler, DNP Dialysis Nurse

Following your management plan should also help you control your blood pressure. High blood pressure can make your kidney disease worse, which can lead to even more problems.

"Heart disease, the disease of the arteries and veins and heart failure can occur in those patients more commonly than in the general public." - Dr. Aaron Dall, Nephrologist/Kidney Specialist

Eating healthy is also an important part of your CKD management plan. You'll need to limit foods high in sodium, or salt, potassium, which is found in a lot of fruits and vegetables, and phosphorus, which is found in prepackaged foods and dairy.

"We give them a nutrition report card and it has their nutrition labs that we look at so the protein, potassium, calcium, phosphorus, then their fluid gains. And it has their numbers for that month." - Kelly Welsh, RD, CD Renal Dietician

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"It's hard but you absolutely do not need to wipe out all of these foods from your diet. I firmly believe that it comes down to balance and it also comes down to a patient being proactive and learning how to read their labs and adjust accordingly." - Kelly Welsh, RD, CD Renal Dietician

"You work a lot with your nutrition dietitian to really tweak those meals so that you're at optimal range within your lab results." - Rogelio, Patient

It's also important to take the medications prescribed by your doctor, something Venus Dickinson takes very seriously since her diagnosis.

"It was very emotional but it wasn't the end of my life. It was the beginning of a new chapter."
– Venus, Patient

"Follow the rules. Make sure you take your medicine. Make sure you get plenty of rest." – Venus, Patient

Staying active is also a good way to manage your kidney disease. Exercise can

- Increase your energy
- Make your muscles stronger and help them work better
- Lower your cholesterol and other blood fats, and
- Help control your weight .

"What we're really trying to do is prevent the need for dialysis or for transplantation if at all possible. So the more the patient can adhere to those treatment plans, the more helpful it is for them."
- Dr. Aaron Dall Nephrologist/Kidney Specialist

Diet, exercise, medications, and regular checkups and lab work with your healthcare team... all key parts of your CKD management plan.