Kidney disease is the 9th leading cause of death in the United States. An estimated 31 million people in the United States (10% of the adult population) have chronic kidney disease (CKD).

9 out of 10 people who have stage 3 CKD (moderately decreased kidney function) do not know it. CKD is more common among women, but men with CKD are 50% more likely than women to have their CKD turn into kidney failure (also called end-stage renal disease or ESRD).

Some racial and ethnic groups are at greater risk for kidney failure. Compared to whites, the risk for African Americans is almost 4 times higher, Native Americans is 1.5 times higher, Asians is 1.4 times higher. Compared to non-Hispanics, Hispanics are almost 1.5 times as likely to be diagnosed with kidney failure.

Leading Causes of Kidney Failure

1 Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure.

Diabetes causes 44% of all new cases of kidney failure. In 2012 it was the primary cause for 239,837 kidney failure patients.

An estimated 29.1 million people have diabetes; 8.1 million of them don’t know they have it. About 40% of people with diabetes will get CKD.

African Americans with diabetes are 3.5 times more likely than whites to get kidney disease.

Most people (69%) participating in a 2011 nationwide survey by the American Kidney Fund could not name diabetes as a leading cause of kidney disease, despite the fact that over half (55%) had a loved one with diabetes.

2 High Blood Pressure is the 2nd leading cause of kidney failure.

High blood pressure (HBP) causes 28.4% of all new cases of kidney failure. In 2012 it was the primary cause for 159,049 kidney failure patients.

An estimated 70 million (29%) people have HBP – that is every 1 in 3 American Adults.

Most people (85%) participating in a 2011 nationwide survey by the American Kidney Fund could not name high blood pressure as a leading cause of kidney disease, yet most of them (75%) had a loved one with high blood pressure.