Know HOW your kidneys

KEEP YOUR HEART HEALTHY

Your kidneys do more than filter wastes and extra fluid from your blood. They also help keep bones healthy, help create red blood cells, and help regulate blood pressure.

HEALTHY KIDNEYS

- Make a protein called erythropoietin (EPO) that tells your body to make red blood cells.
- Make a hormone called renin that helps control your blood pressure.
- Balance the phosphorus and calcium in your body, which is important for heart health.

IF YOU HAVE CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

- Your kidneys can't make enough EPO, so you won't have enough red blood cells (anemia).
- Your kidneys make too much renin. This causes your blood pressure to go up.
- The amount of phosphorus and calcium in your body becomes unbalanced.

STEPS TO PREVENT HEART DISEASE

When your kidneys are not working well, it can lead to problems with other parts of your body. Some complications of chronic kidney disease (CKD) can cause heart disease.

1. **Control high blood pressure**
   - High blood pressure means your body works too hard to pump your blood. It can cause heart attack, heart failure and stroke, so it's important to control it!
   - **Monitor blood pressure**, **eat a low-salt low-fat diet**, **do not smoke**, **take a healthy weight**, **exercise most days**, **limit alcohol**.

2. **Test for and treat anemia**
   - If you have anemia, your heart and other organs can't get enough oxygen. Having anemia can cause a heart attack. If you have anemia, follow your doctor's recommendations for treatment.

3. **Keep minerals in check**
   - Having the wrong amount of calcium and phosphorus in your blood can cause heart disease.
   - **For high phosphorus:** Limit high-phosphorus foods, take phosphate binders. **For low calcium:** Take a calcitriol supplement.

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