

Know Your Patients

A Companion Resource for Healthcare Professionals



This guide is designed for clinicians evaluating individuals at risk for kidney disease as this resource emphasizes the importance of timely detection of kidney disease and clear patient communication. Delayed diagnoses of kidney disease are common, and early intervention enables access to treatments that can preserve kidney function.



SCREENING HEALTH HISTORY AND LIFESTYLE

- Obtain health history and family history of kidney disease
- Screen for high-risk conditions: diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, obesity, autoimmune disease
- Assess lifestyle with diet, physical activity, tobacco use, medications
- Evaluate social determinants of health including access to care and food security



LABS

- Basic metabolic panel (creatinine trend, potassium, phosphorus, and eGFR using CKD-EPI without race)
- Cystatin C: older adults, or high/low muscle mass, amputee
- Urinalysis for specific gravity, blood, protein, infection
- Urine Albumin-to-Creatinine Ratio (UACR): obtain for patients at risk for kidney disease such as diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, family history of kidney disease
- Complete Blood Count to evaluate for anemia
- Hemoglobin A1C
- Lipid Panel



RADIOLOGY

- Kidney ultrasound to evaluate kidney anatomy, obstruction, stones (obtain doppler if possible)



ESTABLISH MONITORING INTERVAL

- Monitor for anemia, acidosis, gout, mineral bone disease
- Interval monitoring of UACR and eGFR trends
- Medication adjustment as kidney function changes



REFERRAL AND CARE COORDINATION

- GFR< 45, significant decline in GFR for age, albuminuria, microscopic hematuria, changes in symptoms, or management of CKD complications
- Coordinate PCP, endocrinology, cardiology, and dietitian
- Nephrology referral for genetic counseling and testing for patients with early-onset CKD or family history



PATIENT ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- Ensure patient understanding of key findings and treatment follow-up plan
- Address any concerns with insurance, accessing medicines, and transportation - consult with social work

Professional Resources:



Research Resources



Accredited Activities

