Kidney Health

Kidney health is important to me because I have had Chronic Kidney Disease since 2017 due to a large kidney stone that caused some damage. Kidney disease is a major public health concern and often goes undetected until it has progressed to the point that dialysis or a transplant is needed. One third of adults in the United States are at risk for kidney disease. Kidney disease can cause a number of issues such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, weak bones, nerve damage, and kidney failure.

Healthy kidneys regulate fluid levels in the body, filter waste and toxins from the blood, keep necessary minerals such as sodium and potassium balanced, and activate hormones that regulates blood pressure and production of red blood cells.

Anyone can get chronic kidney disease at any age. However, some people are more likely than others to develop kidney disease. You may have an increased risk for kidney disease if you:
- have diabetes
- have high blood pressure
- have a family history of kidney failure
- are older
- belong to a population group that has a high rate of diabetes or high blood pressure, such as African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian, Pacific Islanders, and American Indians.

Early signs of kidney disease can include fatigue; difficult, painful, or increased urination; pink, dark, or foamy urine; increased thirst; puffy eyes; and swollen face, hands, feet, and ankles. Your doctor can monitor any potential kidney damage with simple blood and urine tests. Additional testing can include an ultrasound, CT scan, or biopsy.

Ways to manage kidney health include, but aren't limited to: lowering blood pressure and salt intake, managing blood sugar levels, exercising regularly, following a balance diet, and staying hydrated.

*Information provided by the National Kidney Foundation (www.kidney.org)

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