Preventing or Delaying Kidney Disease

WHO GETS KIDNEY DISEASE?
Not everyone with diabetes develops kidney disease. Factors that can influence kidney disease development include genetics, blood sugar control, and blood pressure. The better a person keeps diabetes and blood pressure under control, the lower the chance of getting kidney disease.

HOW CAN I PREVENT OR DELAY KIDNEY DISEASE?
Several things can help you prevent or delay kidney disease. If you already have kidney disease, these steps also help slow it down. All of these actions work best if you start them at the earliest stages of kidney disease.

Keeping your blood pressure on target helps you avoid kidney disease, heart and blood vessel problems, and diabetic eye disease. The American Diabetes Association recommends that most people aim for a blood pressure level of less than 140 over 90.

There are many types of medications to control blood pressure but one type in particular, called an ACE inhibitor, has been proven to slow the progression of kidney disease. In fact, it’s so effective that doctors also prescribe it for people who don’t have high blood pressure so that they can protect their kidneys. Another type of medication, called an ARB, also can help protect kidney function. You may need several types of blood pressure medications to reach your goal.

Another important thing you can do is to reach your blood glucose targets as often as possible. Talk with your health care team about the best blood glucose targets for you.

The Association recommends the following targets:
- When you wake up and before meals - 80 to 130 mg/dl
- 2 hours after starting a meal - below 180 mg/dl

You’ll also want to have an A1C test (also reported as estimated average glucose or eAG) at least twice a year. The results provide your average glucose levels for the previous 2 to 3 months. The Association suggests that most people aim for an A1C of less than 7% or if reported as eAG less than 154 mg/dl.

WHAT I CAN DO TO PREVENT OR DELAY KIDNEY DISEASE?

You can:
- keep your blood pressure and blood glucose levels the target range
- take medications as prescribed
- have regular checkups and get a kidney function check once a year

Making sure you get regular checkups, including an annual check of your urine for microalbumin (small amounts of protein), each year. Also, if you’re overweight, losing even 10 or 15 pounds can help you reach your blood glucose and blood pressure targets.

For more information visit diabetes.org or call 1-800-DIABETES