



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Kidney Health

World Kidney Day — March 11, 2010

Recorded: March 9, 2010; posted: March 11, 2010

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Kidneys rid our body of waste products in the blood. When our kidneys aren't functioning properly, we're subject to a variety of health problems, such as high blood pressure, anemia, bone disease, and heart disease. Left untreated, kidney disease can lead to kidney failure and even death.

Nilka Rios Burrows is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. She's joining us today to discuss ways to prevent and control kidney disease. Welcome to the show, Nilka.

[Ms. Burrows] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Nilka, how many people suffer from kidney disease in the United States?

[Ms. Burrows] Kidney disease affects more than 26 million adults in the United States. In 2007, it was the ninth leading cause of death and more than half a million people were living on chronic dialysis or with a kidney transplant.

[Dr. Gaynes] Is it more common in any particular group?

[Ms. Burrows] Kidney disease can occur at any age, but cases occur more frequently in older age groups, among people age 60 years or older.

[Dr. Gaynes] Well, what causes kidney disease?

[Ms. Burrows] The primary causes of kidney disease are diabetes and high blood pressure. And often, these two conditions occur together. Three out of four people who report having diabetes, also report having high blood pressure.

[Dr. Gaynes] What symptoms might indicate the onset of kidney disease?

[Ms. Burrows] Kidney disease, like high blood pressure, is a silent condition. People often don't have symptoms. They don't know they have kidney disease because they don't feel sick. In fact, by the time that they do have symptoms, the disease might be very advanced.

[Dr. Gaynes] So how is kidney disease diagnosed?

[Ms. Burrows] Kidney disease is diagnosed with simple blood and urine tests. If you have diabetes or high blood pressure or a family member with kidney disease or kidney failure, talk to your doctor about getting tested.

[Dr. Gaynes] Nilka, how is kidney disease treated?

[Ms. Burrows] There's a certain class of blood pressure medicines called ACE inhibitors that protect the kidney and slows the progression of kidney disease, in addition to lowering blood pressure. Also, if you have diabetes, you keep your blood sugar levels under control; if you have high blood pressure, you keep your blood pressure under control. This can help prevent or delay kidney failure.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about preventing kidney disease?

[Ms. Burrows] For more information, they can go to www.cdc.gov and do a search on "kidney disease."

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Nilka. I've been talking today with CDC's Nilka Rios Burrows about ways to prevent and control kidney disease.

Remember, chronic kidney disease can lead to kidney failure and even death. Early detection through simple blood and urine tests can prevent more serious problems in the future. In addition, controlling blood sugars and blood pressure can help reduce the chances of developing chronic kidney disease.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.