



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Healthy Kidneys

National Kidney Month — March 2014

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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[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 serve as the body's filtering system, removing waste and excess water from the blood. If your kidneys are damaged or don't function properly, you can have severe health problems.

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 the dangers of kidney disease. Welcome to the show, Nilka.

[Nilka Rios Burrows] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Nilka, how common is kidney disease in the U.S.?

[Nilka Rios Burrows] In the United States, more than 10 percent, or more than 20 million adults are estimated to have chronic kidney disease.

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

[Nilka Rios Burrows] It is most common among adults older than 70. Your chances of having kidney disease increase with age after age 50. Kidneys age, just like all of us. In addition to older age, diabetes and high blood pressure are major risk factors for kidney disease.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the symptoms of kidney disease?

[Nilka Rios Burrows] People with kidney disease tend not to have any symptoms. In fact, most people with kidney disease, including those with severe disease, are not aware of their condition. And that's why it's so important that, if you have diabetes or high blood pressure or a relative with kidney disease or kidney failure, to talk to your doctor about getting tested for kidney disease. Simple blood and urine tests are used to diagnose it and early diagnosis and treatment will help to slow down the progression of the disease.

[Dr. Gaynes] What health problems can result from kidney disease?

[Nilka Rios Burrows] Kidney disease can lead to other health problems, such as heart disease, anemia, and bone disease. Also, if left untreated, kidney disease can lead to

kidney failure which requires dialysis or a kidney transplant and even death. Kidney disease is the ninth leading cause of death in the United States.

[Dr. Gaynes] Nilka, what can we do to prevent kidney disease?

[Nilka Rios Burrows] Well, we cannot prevent aging—I wish I could—but there are other things that we can do. If you have diabetes or high blood pressure, keep the blood sugar levels and the blood pressure under control. Talk to your doctor about how to take charge of these conditions to prevent or delay kidney disease.

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

[Nilka Rios Burrows] Listeners can go to cdc.gov/ckd.

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

Remember, because kidney disease often develops slowly and has few warning signs, if you have diabetes or high blood pressure, it's important to get regular care to keep them under control.

Until next time, be well. This is your host 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.