

This information is forwarded by the **Love Thy Neighbor Ministry** at Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Milton FL.
Source of Information: The Catholic Foundation of Northwest Florida. Due to the many references, some may not be current but have many useful reference sources. Emails are sent using the Blind Carbon Copy (BCC) method.

This quality of life series focuses primarily on senior citizens plus other supplemental information. You do not have to be a Senior to make use of this information. If you know of a Senior, a parishioner or a neighbor who could use this information you are invited to give them a copy of this email. Fellowship through improved communications is guided by the second greatest commandment. Sometimes an act of kindness can be as simple as a phone call, a visit, or receipt of an email.

Suggestion: Create a separate folder for this information for ease of reference.

For information about our Parish, click on the following link: <http://parishesonline.com/scripts/HostedSites/Org.asp?ID=14423>

Our parish spirit is rising, is rising.

Kidney Disease: A Silent Killer That Affects Millions of Seniors

http://www.legacygifts.org/savvy_senior.jsp?WebID=GL2004-0129&D=200909

Savvy Senior

Dear Savvy Senior,

What can you tell me about kidney disease? My dad died from kidney failure about 10 years ago at age 70. I want to know what my risks are and what I can do to protect myself.

Chip Off the Old Block

Dear Chip,

If you have a family history of kidney disease, high blood pressure or diabetes you're at risk, and you need to have your kidneys tested. Here's what you should know.

Growing Epidemic

Most people are unaware that there are 26 million Americans that have chronic kidney disease today and 20 million more are at risk of developing it. That's because kidney disease develops very slowly over many years before any symptoms arise. And left untreated, the disease can eventually require people to spend hours hooked up to a dialysis machine or get a kidney transplant. Even mild kidney problems can double a person's risk of heart attack and stroke as well as cause anemia and bone loss.

The reason kidney disease has become so common today is because of the growing epidemic of type II diabetes and high blood pressure, both of which strain the kidneys. Another factor is the increasing number of people who take multiple medications, which can overtax the organs. People over age 60 are especially vulnerable both because they tend to take more drugs, and because kidney function normally declines somewhat with age.

Get Tested

Because kidney disease has no early symptoms, the only way to catch it before it advances is to have a simple blood and urine test done by your doctor. So, if you have diabetes, high blood pressure or heart disease, a family history of kidney disease, or are age 60 or older you need to get tested. African, Hispanic, Asian and Indian Americans along with Pacific Islanders are also at increased risk.

What You Can Do

If you're diagnosed with kidney disease you need to know that there's no cure, but there are steps you can take to help contain the damage, including:

Control your high blood pressure:

If you have it, that means getting your pressure under 130/80. If you need medication to get it under control, ACE inhibitors and ARBs are good choices because of their proven ability to protect the kidneys.

Control your diabetes: If you have diabetes, keep your blood sugar as close to normal as possible.

Change your diet:

Generally this means reducing the amount of protein and phosphorus you eat, and cutting back on sodium and possibly potassium. Your doctor can help you determine an appropriate eating plan, or you may want to talk to a dietitian. Also see www.kidney.org - click on "Kidney Disease" then on "Nutrition Diet" to find lots of tips and information on this topic.

Watch your meds:

Many common medicines can also damage the kidneys, especially when taken in high doses over long periods such as ibuprofen (Advil), naproxen (Aleve), celecoxib (Celebrex), aspirin (Excedrin) and acetaminophen (Tylenol). Talk to your doctor about all the prescription, over-the-counter and herbal products you take to identify other potential problems. They can also help you find a safe alternative solution.

Adopt three healthy tips:

If you smoke, quit. If you're overweight, lose it. If you're inactive, exercise. All three will lower your risk for diabetes and high blood pressure, which can lead to kidney disease.

Savvy Tips: For more information on kidney disease visit the National Kidney and Urologic Diseases Information Clearinghouse at www.kidney.niddk.nih.gov (or call 800-891-5390) where you can order dozens of free publications, find out about clinical trials and more. Another great service is the National Kidney Foundation's Kidney Early Evaluation Program (KEEP), which offers free screenings in many communities across the country, and is available to anyone at risk. It also provides free screenings in at least 20 additional cities on World Kidney Day coming up on March 12. To find a site near you visit www.keeponline.org or call 800-622-9010.