

Kidney Disease in Malaysia

Function of Kidneys

The kidneys play an important role in removing toxins and excess water from our blood. On average, the kidneys filter about 200 litres of blood in a day. Apart from that, the kidneys also help to control blood pressure, produce red blood cells and keep our bones healthy.

Chronic Kidney Disease

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) occurs when the kidneys gradually lose their ability to function. It is a "silent" disease and often goes unnoticed because it may not be "felt". CKD affects many people – studies of different races in different continents worldwide have consistently shown that approximately 1 out of 10 adults have some form of kidney damage.

People with CKD are more likely to have high blood pressure, diabetes, heart attacks and strokes. Furthermore, the health of their kidneys may progressively worsen to the point where the kidneys must be replaced. Patients can opt for either of the treatment methods available – they either receive a new, transplanted kidney or they are kept alive with dialysis.

CKD can be detected early on, and detection is easy. Simple, routine tests of the urine, blood and blood pressure can reveal early signs of kidney problems. The good news is, CKD can be delayed and prevented through medication and a change in lifestyle once these problems are ascertained.

Chronic Kidney Disease and Cardiovascular Disease

The risk of premature death, arising primarily from cardiovascular disease is, on average, 100 times higher in patients with CKD than the risk of developing end-stage renal disease (ESRD).

Hence, early detection and treatment of CKD not only slows or halts the progression of patients to ESRD, but it also significantly reduces the incidence of cardiovascular disease, which is today by far the most common cause of premature death worldwide.

Disease Overview

The number of patients requiring dialysis has increased dramatically over the past 20 years in Malaysia. More than 2,500 people develop end stage renal failure every year which is about 100 per million population per year. Furthermore, this rate is increasing – in 1980, only 43 people were accepted for dialysis but the number increased to 2,636 in 2005.

This is partially caused by the rise of diabetes and hypertension, which increases the risk for kidney disease. Approximately 50% of advanced kidney failures are due to diabetes mellitus and if not detected and treated effectively can lead to kidney failure and death.

It is crucial for individuals to treat and manage kidney disease as early as possible, especially if they fall in the high risk category i.e. those who suffer from diabetes and high blood pressure. Proper treatment and management of kidney disease enables patients to maintain a good quality of life.

Treatment Overview

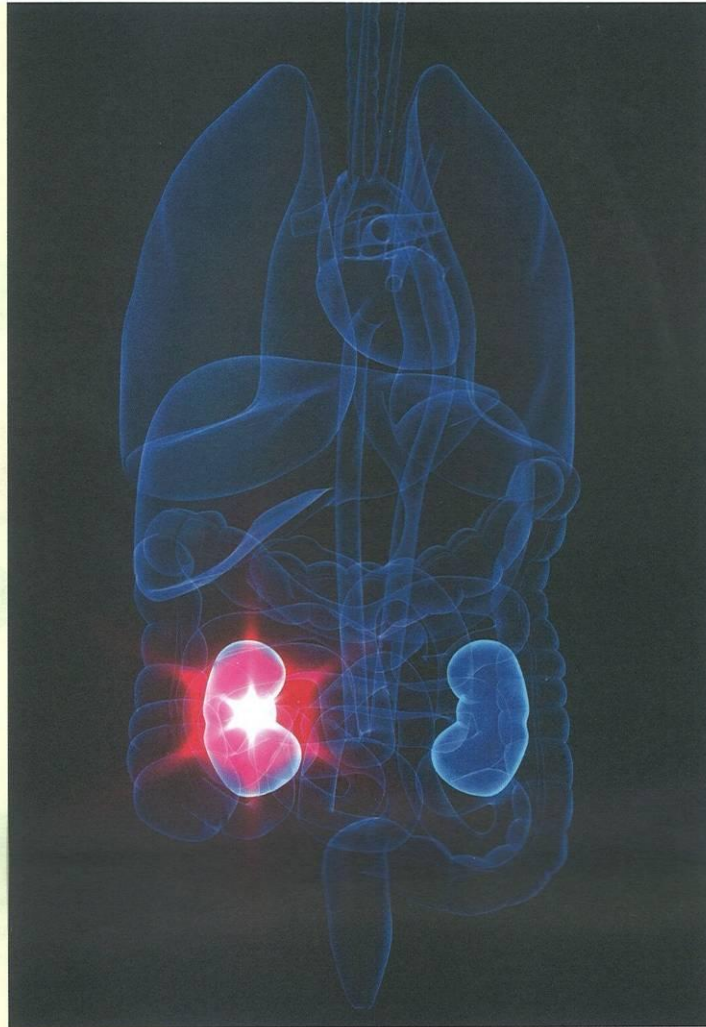
There are three main forms of treatment for kidney disease:

- Haemodialysis
- Peritoneal dialysis
- Kidney transplant

Kidney transplantation is a permanent solution. However it is normally restricted to severe cases as the scarcity of donors and difficulties in obtaining a match limits the number of patients who can receive one. Unlike the situation in some countries where the majority of kidney donors are cadaveric, the organ transplantation programme in Malaysia is still heavily dependent on live related donors for kidney and liver transplantation. Since the need for donated organs far exceeds the supply from local, voluntary live donors, a market has emerged which transcends national boundaries.

Thus, most patients with kidney disease require haemodialysis (HD) or peritoneal dialysis (PD). In Malaysia the number of end stage kidney patients that are on treatment, HD is the most common form of dialysis. However, this does not necessarily mean that is the best treatment – both HD and PD are effective treatments, but the choice of treatment depends on the patient's medical history, whether they are suffering from any other condition, their lifestyle requirements, and other factors.

Doctors would take into account the health of the patient and the presence of any other existing medical condition to determine whether a patient is put on HD or PD. For example, PD would be the recommended option for those with vascular problems as HD would then not be suitable.



World Kidney Day 2008

To commemorate World Kidney Day which falls on 13th March 2008, the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) together with the Malaysian Society of Nephrology (MSN) and the Ministry of Health (MOH) are organising the second World Kidney Day walkathon along with other World Kidney Day activities including health talks and a children's art competition, among others.

Come and be a part of this year's World Kidney Day celebrations by participating in the **Amazing Kidneys Walk** on

Date: Sunday, 16th March 2008

Time: 7:00 – 9:30 a.m.

Venue: Taman Jaya Recreational Park, Petaling Jaya

The walkathon is open to all members of the public and kidney patients alike. The public will be charged RM20 to participate while kidney patients get to walk for free.

Additionally, health screenings, kidney care health talks, a health exhibition and a children's art competition will be held at **Amcorp Mall** from **10:00 a.m. onwards** on the same day.

To register for the walkathon or to find out more, call 03-7954 9048 (Ext 225/242), email edu@nkf.org.my or log on to www.nkf.org.my for further details.