

NIH urges -- Be kind to your kidneys

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Kidney disease can lead to heart disease, and vice versa. And on World Kidney Day, Griffin P. Rodgers, M.D., director of the NIH's National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases asks people to consider the link, and what they can do to protect kidney health. March 10 marks World Kidney Day this year; it's part of National Kidney Month.

More than 20 million adults have chronic kidney disease and an estimated 16.3 million or roughly 7 percent of adults — have [heart disease](#). And over 7.1 million people have both.

As part of National Kidney Month, the NIH's National Kidney Disease Education Program suggests at least 10 things people can do to be kind to their kidneys and to look out for family and friends. Topping the list is getting tested for kidney disease if you have diabetes, high blood pressure, or a family history of kidney failure. Learn about the other nine actions by visiting www.nkdep.nih.gov/KidneyMonth .

While NIH programs help people understand their kidneys and how to protect them, NIH researchers and those supported by NIH are working to better understand why and how the kidneys become damaged and how to prevent the disease and improve care:

- In Nov. 2010, the Frequent Hemodialysis Network Daily Trial (NCT00264758) found that increasing hemodialysis to six times week from the standard three times improved heart health. Learn

more at www.nih.gov/news/health/nov2010/niddk-20.htm.

- The Chronic Renal Insufficiency Cohort study (NCT00304148) is following nearly 4,000 adults to identify factors associated with rapid progression of kidney disease and the development or worsening of heart disease. What we learn from this study is expected to help us identify ways to intervene.
- The Chronic Kidney Disease Biomarker Discovery and Validation Consortium is developing blood and urine tests to better predict patients who will have rapid progression of kidney disease or worsening of heart disease.

Learn more about these NIH studies and others at www.ClinicalTrials.gov. Participating in a clinical study is another way people can help themselves, family and friends. And there are many opportunities. Among the 85,000 studies listed, a recent search found nearly 5,000 related to [kidney disease](#) and more than 12,000 related to heart disease.

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