



## ***Our Families Our Hearts***

### African Americans and Kidney Disease

When the kidneys no longer properly filter blood to remove waste and extra fluids, kidney disease develops. The possibility of getting kidney disease may be inherited, but 70% of all kidney disease is caused by high blood pressure and Type 2 Diabetes.

- African Americans are 4-times more likely than Caucasians to develop kidney failure. This is due to high rates of high blood pressure and diabetes in the African American community.
- African Americans develop kidney disease sooner than other groups, often with no warning signs.

### Turn It Around

Early kidney disease, like high blood pressure, is a silent disease whose symptoms are not obvious. But if kidney disease is found early enough, it can be treated effectively.

- Know your risk - high blood sugar (diabetes), high blood pressure, and having family members with kidney disease all increase your risk.



*This project is supported by a Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) from the National Center for Research Resources, the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Its content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of NCRR or NIH.*



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## Turn It Around

- Get regular medical care. Your health care provider can pick up on risks and symptoms that you might miss. Simple tests may help uncover kidney problems and prevent years of suffering.
- Control risk factors for diabetes and high blood pressure:
  - limit sodium and sugar, don't smoke, and limit alcohol.
- Seek immediate medical attention if you have any of these signs of kidney failure:
  - An unexplained increase or decrease in your amount of urine
  - Getting up at night to urinate frequently
  - Blood in your urine
  - Swelling or sudden and unexplained weight gain

## First Steps

Accepting that you are at risk for or have kidney disease is the first step to creating a healthy plan for your future. Start with a few key steps and build those habits for a long, fulfilling life.

- Get to know your family's history—its triumphs and challenges—as well as any history of chronic disease. Be sure and keep a record for your future generations.
- Add a salad to one meal a day. Use a variety of green lettuces, some crunchy veggies, and a healthy dressing low in sodium.

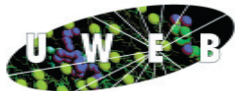
*The mission of Youth Take Heart is to expand the knowledge and interest of young people, especially those in underserved communities, and their families, to take positive action to promote lifelong heart health and prevent cardiovascular disease.*



[www.hopeheart.org](http://www.hopeheart.org)



[www.washingtonmesa.org](http://www.washingtonmesa.org)



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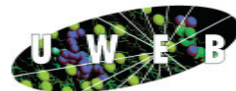
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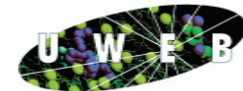
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