

## Ask Your Doctor about Kidney Disease Screening

Even if you feel healthy today, you may have chronic kidney disease (CKD) and don't know it. About 1 in 7 adults in the United States are estimated to have CKD and most are undiagnosed. Many people don't have any symptoms of kidney disease until the disease has progressed to an advanced stage. This is why we call CKD the "silent killer." It can be advancing without your knowledge.

To guard your kidney health, talk with your doctor about getting simple blood and urine lab tests. Free screening for CKD may be available in some communities.

### What Are Simple Lab Tests for Kidney Disease?

Two simple lab tests are used to screen for kidney disease—a urine test and a blood test.

#### Urine Test

A simple urine test can detect a type of protein in your urine. Protein is an important building block in your body. Healthy kidneys filter the protein, which is reabsorbed and kept in your body. When your kidneys are damaged, protein leaks into your urine. Three positive tests over a period of 3 or more months may indicate kidney disease.

#### Blood Test

A simple blood test that detects kidney disease is a creatinine test. *Creatinine* is a waste product produced from normal breakdown of muscle cells. Healthy kidneys filter the creatinine out of the blood into the urine. If the kidneys aren't working properly, creatine builds up in the blood.

Your creatine result is used in a math formula with your age, sex, and body size to find out your glomerular filtration rate (GFR). GFR shows how much kidney function you have. A low level of GFR may mean your kidneys are no longer working as well as they should to remove waste from your body.