

RAISING AWARENESS - GLOMERULAR DISEASE

March is National Kidney Month

Glomerular Disease is the Leading Cause of End-Stage Renal Disease

Glomerular Disease is a condition that reduces the ability of the kidneys to maintain a balance of certain substances in the bloodstream. Healthy kidneys filter toxins out of the bloodstream and excrete them in the urine, keeping red blood cells and protein in the bloodstream. With glomerular disease, however, red blood cells and protein are excreted into the urine while toxins are not.

This guide has been created to educate patients on the different types of glomerular disease and symptoms.

01 | Types of Glomerular Disease

The hallmark of glomerular disorders is proteinuria, which is the presence of excess serum proteins in the urine. The two main types of glomerular disease are:

- **Nephrotic Syndrome:** this syndrome causes high protein in the urine but little to no blood. Kidney function worsens as the disease progresses. Complications include swelling, high blood pressure, an increased risk of infections and blood clots.
- **Nephritic Syndrome:** the key feature of nephritic syndrome is blood in the urine. In mild cases, the patient may not have any symptoms and be unaware of the condition. This syndrome may be caused by lupus or other illnesses, and in severe cases will cause impaired kidney function, edema and high blood pressure.

02 | Diagnosis

Your medical provider will typically use a combination of tests to determine the presence of glomerular disease, the most common of which are listed below:

- **Urine Tests** – urinalysis can indicate damage or inflammation of the glomeruli (blood vessels of the kidney), infection and/or increased protein levels.
- **Blood Tests:** creatinine and blood urea nitrogen (BUN) levels may be tested, as elevated levels indicate that the kidneys are not functioning properly. Other blood tests may also be ordered to diagnose underlying conditions such as diabetes, lupus or infections.
- **Imaging Tests:** an ultrasound can measure the size of the kidney, which helps your medical provider determine the duration of kidney disease. It can also rule out other causes of decreased kidney function.
- **Kidney Biopsy:** for a conclusive determination of the cause of glomerular disease, your medical provider may recommend a renal biopsy, wherein kidney tissue is removed and examined for scarring, infection or abnormalities.

03 | Living With Glomerular Disease

If you have been diagnosed with glomerular disease, it is important to protect your kidneys. Here are some ways to do so:

- Maintain a healthy weight and exercise often
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol
- Limit sodium intake
- Control blood pressure and blood sugar levels

For additional information, please visit:

<https://www.kidney.org/>

***Did You Know?**
1 in 10 Americans have
chronic kidney disease*

References

<http://www.uptodate.com/contents/glomerular-disease-overview-beyond-the-basics>

https://www.kidney.org/sites/default/files/12-10-6139_glomerulardisease.pdf