

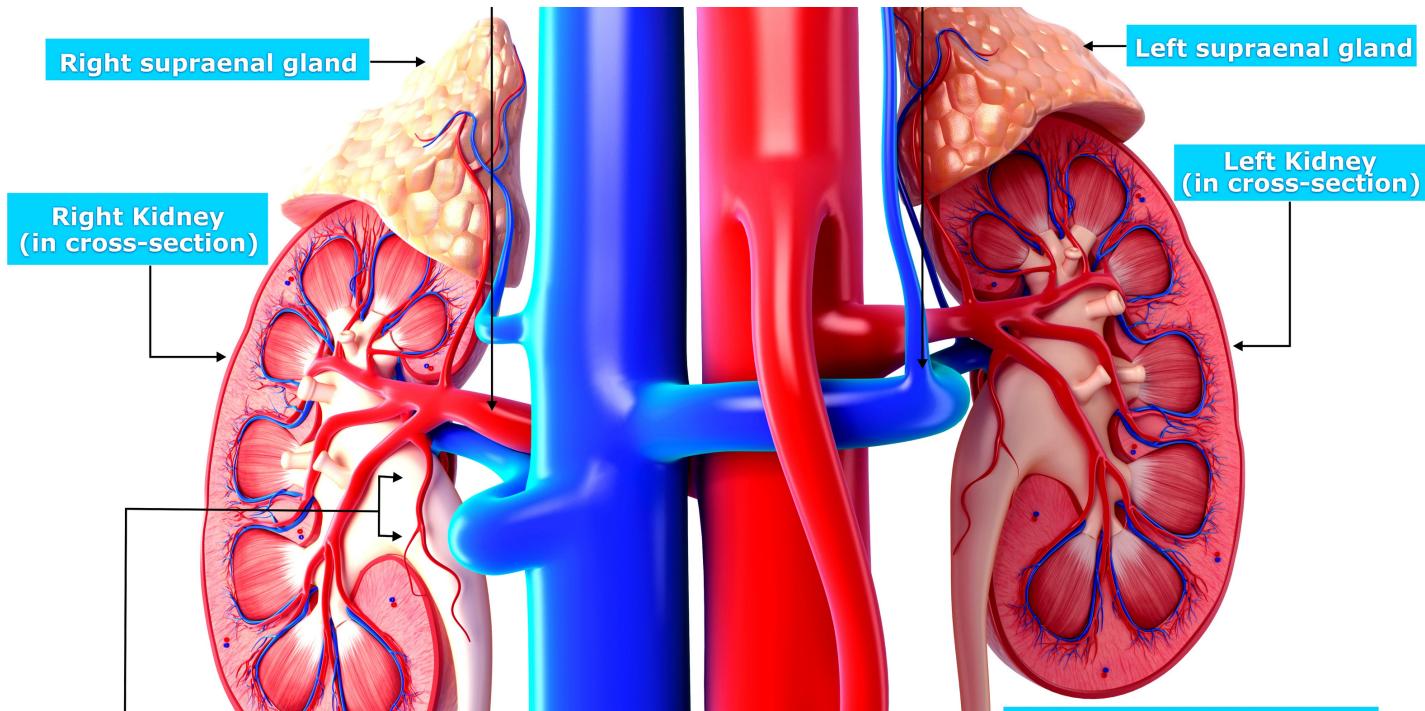
HEALTH AWARENESS



A COUNTY HEALTH
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KIDNEY DISEASE



Most people know that a major function of the kidneys is to remove waste products and excess fluid from the body. These waste products and excess fluid are removed through the urine. The production of urine involves highly complex steps of excretion and re-absorption. This process is necessary to maintain a stable balance of body chemicals.

The kidneys perform the critical regulation of the body's salt, potassium, and acid content. The kidneys also produce hormones that affect the function of other organs. For example, a hormone produced by the kidneys stimulates red blood cell production. Other hormones produced by the kidneys help regulate blood pressure and control calcium metabolism.

The kidneys are powerful chemical factories that perform the following functions:

- remove waste products from the body

- remove drugs from the body
- balance the body's fluids
- release hormones that regulate blood pressure
- produce an active form of vitamin D that promotes strong, healthy bones
- control the production of red blood cells

There are two kidneys, each about the size of a fist, located on either side of the spine at the lowest level of the rib cage. The kidneys perform their life-sustaining job of filtering and returning to the bloodstream about 200 quarts of fluid every 24 hours. About two quarts are removed from the body in the form of urine, and about 198 quarts are recovered. The urine we excrete has been stored in the bladder for anywhere from 1 to 8 hours.

CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

Chronic kidney disease is defined as having some type of kidney abnormality, or "marker," such as protein in the urine and having decreased kidney func-

tion for three months or longer. There are many causes of chronic kidney disease. The kidneys may be affected by diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Some kidney conditions are inherited (run in families). Others are congenital; individuals may be born with an abnormality that can affect their kidneys. The following are some of the most common types and causes of kidney damage:

- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Glomerulonephritis
- Polycystic kidney disease
- Kidney stones
- Urinary tract infections

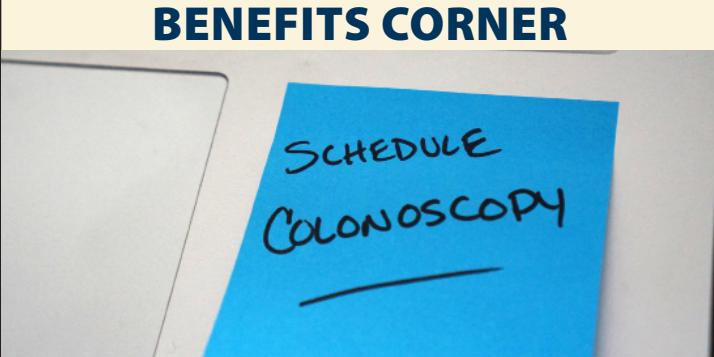
CAN KIDNEY DISEASE BE SUCCESSFULLY TREATED?

Many kidney diseases can be treated successfully. Careful control of diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure can help prevent kidney disease or keep it from getting worse. Kidney stones and urinary tract infections can usually be treated successfully. Unfortunately, the exact causes of some kidney diseases are still unknown, and specific treatments are not yet available for them. Sometimes, chronic kidney disease may progress to kidney failure, requiring dialysis or kidney transplantation. A great deal of research is being done to find a more effective treatment for all conditions that can cause chronic kidney disease.

PEOPLE AT INCREASED RISK

You may have an increased risk for kidney disease if you are older, have diabetes, high blood pressure, a family member with the disease, or are of African American, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander or American Indian descent. If you are in one of these groups or think you may have an increased risk for kidney disease, ask your doctor about getting tested.

BENEFITS CORNER



COLONOSCOPY COVERAGE

A colonoscopy can fall under your County Health Pool preventive services, payable 100% by the Plan if an in-network provider is used or under your medical diagnostic outpatient services, subject to your deductible and coinsurance 80%/20% or 60%/40% if a non-network provider is used.

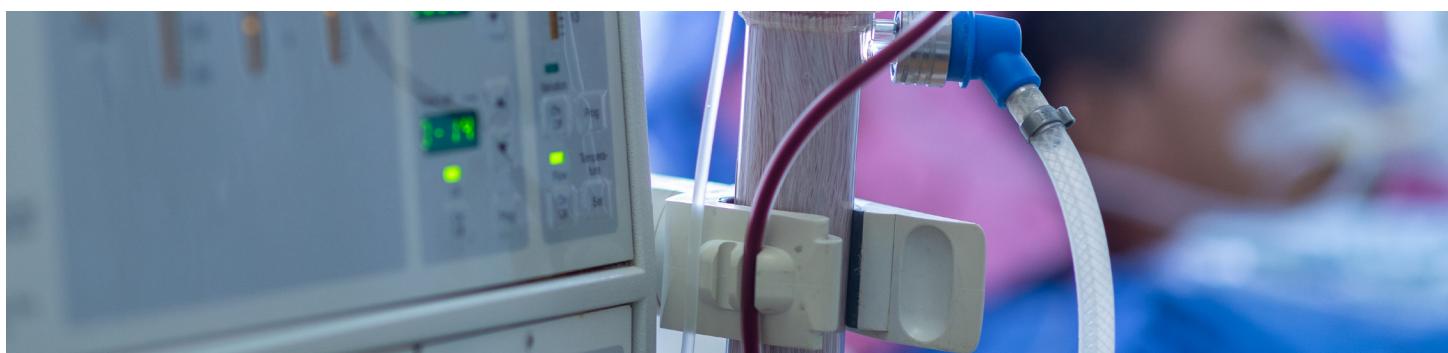
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PREVENTIVE OR DIAGNOSTIC?

Diagnostic is when you have symptoms, and your provider needs to find the cause of your symptoms, so they suggest a colonoscopy, which would be billed as diagnostic.

Preventive is when you have no symptoms, but your provider recommends a colonoscopy because of your age, which would be billed as preventive by your provider.

A preventive colonoscopy may be changed to a diagnostic one if your provider finds something at the time of your colonoscopy. In that case, your provider could change the coding from preventive to diagnostic based on their findings.

As always, CTSI staff is here to assist you with your health, dental, vision, or life insurance coverage.



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