

Anemia

Related to Chronic Kidney Disease

People With Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) Are at Risk for Developing Anemia

Anemia is a condition in which the body does not have enough red blood cells (RBCs). RBCs contain an important substance called hemoglobin, which carries oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body.

Healthy kidneys produce a hormone called erythropoietin (EPO), which helps the body make red blood cells. Kidneys that aren't working properly make less EPO, causing anemia. Anemia may make you feel tired and weak. There are other problems that may cause anemia, such as:

- Vitamin and mineral deficiencies
- Blood loss
- Inflammation

Source: NKF, National Kidney Foundation

If you have anemia, you may find it hard to do some of your normal daily tasks or activities. If you have been feeling tired since you developed kidney problems, you may have anemia.

What May Happen When Anemia Is Present?

Anemia has been reported to be associated with serious complications, such as cardiovascular disease (heart and circulation problems). Patients with CKD should routinely be assessed for anemia.



Common Signs and Symptoms of Anemia

- Tiredness, weakness
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Dizziness
- Paleness
- Increased heart rate

Talk to your healthcare professional if you experience any of these to determine if you have anemia related to CKD.

Source: NKF, National Kidney Foundation

How Is Anemia Monitored?

Blood testing (a complete blood count, or CBC) will help your doctor monitor various health concerns, including anemia related to CKD. To monitor anemia, hemoglobin (Hb) or hematocrit (HCT) levels are measured. Hb is found in the red blood cells (RBCs) and carries oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body. HCT is the percentage of RBCs in your blood. Ask your healthcare professional how often blood testing will be conducted.

How Is Anemia Treated?

Anemia may be treated with medications or blood transfusions. If you are anemic, your doctor will review possible treatment options and decide which treatment is best for you.

Your doctor will be able to better diagnose and treat your condition if he or she knows that you are experiencing symptoms. Be sure to talk to your doctor about how you are feeling.

Ask your doctor or nurse to fill in your target ranges below. These are the ranges that the doctor feels are appropriate for you to maintain.

Hb/HCT

Blood Pressure

Blood Sugar



This guide does not replace advice from your doctor. Talk to your doctor about your symptoms and any health or treatment questions that you may have.

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