Cleveland Clinic nephrologists are experts at evaluating and managing chronic kidney disease (CKD). An innovative team-care model addresses the life cycle of the disease. The Center for Chronic Kidney Disease focuses on empowering patients through education and on tailoring treatment to improve patients’ quality of life.

Areas of Focus
- **Chronic Kidney Disease Clinic**
- **Patient Education**
- **Renal Research**

The center’s progressive model for managing CKD addresses patients’ needs at every stage of the disease. Experienced nephrologists and other staff members engage patients in customized care programs that help them understand their condition and participate in their own care. Treatment is focused on slowing the progression of CKD, identifying risks for cardiovascular disease and decreasing the risk of complications from surgery. Additionally, the center is dedicated to cutting-edge CKD research regarding CKD’s relationship with other serious health problems, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and anemia.

**Chronic Kidney Disease Clinic**
A team-care model has proven effective in managing CKD. Physicians design treatment programs, which are supported by nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nutritionists and educators. A three-pronged approach to evaluating and managing CKD involves:

- Delaying progression to ease the burden of end-stage renal disease
- Reducing the morbidity rate of CKD patients through intensive cardiovascular risk management
- Optimizing the transition to renal replacement therapy, such as dialysis or kidney transplant

**Patient Education**
An effective treatment program requires partnership between the patient and medical staff. The center’s comprehensive CKD patient education program helps individuals understand renal disease risks and management strategies. A dedicated CKD educator leads the charge. Patients are supported with information concerning nutrition, cholesterol, blood pressure and CKD care. Ultimately, patient education results in more CKD success stories.

**Renal Research**
Cleveland Clinic is a leading medical institution for CKD management and research. The Center for CKD is involved in sophisticated projects and is a leader in national multicenter studies.

**Chronic Renal Insufficiency Cohort (CRIC) Study:** Cleveland Clinic is participating in a long-term observational study of 3,000 individuals with mild to moderate CKD. The study is examining the relationship between CKD and cardiovascular disease in order to better diagnose and treat both conditions.

- The study is funded by the National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).
- Patient participants receive general healthcare from their own clinicians while CRIC investigators measure kidney, heart and blood vessel health.
- Participants are followed for five years with annual clinic visits and telephone contact.
- Ancillary studies examine CKD and speech, cognition and eye health, among other areas.

The Center for Chronic Kidney Disease meets and exceeds targets set by the National Kidney Foundation for patient outcomes.
CKD Biological Model Science Program: The program goal is to tailor better therapies for CKD-related health problems, such as anemia, bone loss and cardiovascular disease. Cleveland Clinic is engaged in molecular research to pinpoint genes involved in these ancillary conditions.

- A CKD biological model will allow physicians to test CKD treatment hypotheses.
- The lab experience allows Cleveland Clinic to study key CKD research questions.

Innovative Solutions

The Center for Chronic Kidney Disease utilizes technological advances and electronic medical records to connect with patients and proactively engage in their care.

CKD Registry

With a robust registry of patients affected by CKD, Cleveland Clinic developed a registry that will aid in monitoring this population's progress during the life cycle of the disease. The ability to follow patients from primary care management to nephrologic care on to CKD care and finally to renal replacement therapy, is a valuable foundation for future research and discovery. The registry also will shed light on how the medical community recognizes and manages CKD.

CKD Electronic Alert

The National Kidney Foundation set evidence-based clinical practice guidelines for all stages of CKD and related complications. Cleveland Clinic is implementing a computer-based physician alert system to notify medical staff of patients' CKD diagnosis. The CKD Electronic Alert will inform physicians of CKD management suggestions based on the National Kidney Foundation's Kidney Disease Outcomes Quality Initiative. Because CKD is often discovered in later stages, and sometimes a person has lost 70 percent of kidney function by that time, Cleveland Clinic is taking aggressive steps to identify the disease in its early stages. That way, CKD and related diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, can be managed with optimum results.

For an appointment with a nephrologist, call 216.444.6771

For more information, visit clevelandclinic.org/nephrology.