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NEW PUBLICATION HELPS AFRICAN AMERICANS "MAKE THE KIDNEY CONNECTION"

The National Kidney Disease Education Program Creates New Brochure for African Americans at Risk for Kidney Disease

The National Kidney Disease Education Program (NKDEP), an initiative of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), has created an educational brochure tailored specifically for African Americans at risk for kidney disease. The brochure—*Kidney Disease: What African Americans Need to Know*—explains the connection between diabetes, high blood pressure, and kidney disease, and encourages those at risk to talk to their health care providers about getting tested.

African Americans are disproportionately affected by kidney failure due in part to higher rates of diabetes and high blood pressure—the two leading causes of kidney failure. "Diabetes and high blood pressure are all too common among African Americans, yet many are unaware of their risk factors and the importance of getting tested," said Griffin P. Rodgers, M.D., director of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK). "NKDEP recognizes the importance of promoting key messages about kidney disease risk factors to this audience."

The brochure explains the blood and urine tests used to detect kidney disease in simple, easy-to-read language. It also outlines several steps to protect one's kidneys. These include:

- Keeping your kidneys healthy by managing your diabetes and high blood pressure;
- Asking your health care provider to test your blood and urine for kidney disease; and
- If you have kidney disease, talking to your health care provider about treatment options.

"Unlike many diseases, kidney disease often has no symptoms until it is very advanced," says NKDEP Director, Dr. Andrew Narva. "For this reason and others, it is important for African Americans to not only become aware of their risk, but also to learn about the



steps they can take to keep their kidneys healthier longer. An important step is to get tested.”

In developing the brochure, NKDEP worked with health care professionals who routinely care for African American patients at risk for kidney disease. Reviewers included NKDEP Coordinating Panel members and representatives from the Association of Minority Nephrologists.

By partnering with national, state, and local organizations, including government agencies, NKDEP hopes to reach a large number of African Americans with this information.

For more information about the brochure and other NKDEP materials, visit www.nkdep.nih.gov or call 1-866-4 KIDNEY (1-866-454-3639).

NKDEP, an initiative of NIDDK, aims to improve early detection of kidney disease, help identify patients at risk for progression of kidney failure, and promote interventions to slow progression of kidney disease.

NIDDK, a component of the NIH, conducts and supports research in diabetes and other endocrine and metabolic diseases; digestive diseases, nutrition, and obesity; and kidney, urologic, and hematologic diseases. Spanning the full spectrum of medicine and afflicting people of all ages and ethnic groups, these diseases encompass some of the most common, severe, and disabling conditions affecting Americans. For more information about NIDDK and its programs, see www.niddk.nih.gov.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) -- The Nation's Medical Research Agency -- includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the primary federal agency for conducting and supporting basic, clinical, and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit <http://www.nih.gov>.

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