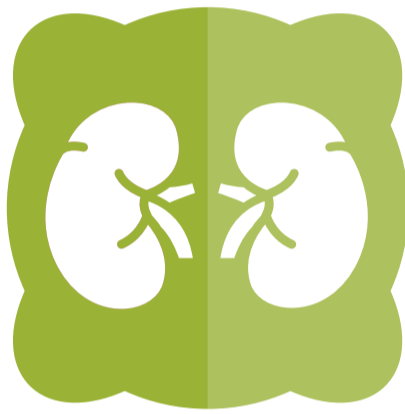


KIDNEY DISORDERS

As the disease progresses, changes in every kidney structure impairs the body's capacity of removing impurities from the blood. Over time, all substances that couldn't be purified accumulate, producing toxic effects at all levels, and patients must undergo renal replacement therapy through dialysis or a kidney transplant.

Most frequent kidney problems:

1. Diabetic nephropathy.
2. Urinary infections.
3. Other types of renal diseases: glomerulonephritis.
4. Acute renal failure associated with:
 - Use of contrast media for diagnostic studies.
 - Decompensation of certain associated diseases, such as heart failure.



What is diabetic nephropathy?

It's an alteration that occurs due to the inadequate control of blood glucose and other associated factors. It is part of the chronic complications of diabetes, since changes in the kidneys function may lead to different degrees of kidney failure.

It's produced by the elevation of blood glucose levels, which modifies renal function. Over time, this deterioration can result in a permanent damage. This process is accelerated when a diabetic patient also has hypertension and/or smoking habits. There are other influential factors, such as genetic conditions and repeated urinary tract infections.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms do not appear until serious and sometimes irreversible damage is done to kidney function. It's essential to take periodical blood and urine tests at least once a year: albumin level, proteinuria and blood creatinine levels testing allow for early diagnosis and appropriate medical interventions, in order to improve diabetes and blood pressure control.

TREATMENT

Incipient nephropathy or disease's onset may be treated by keeping glycemic values as close to normal as possible.



- Diet: reduce animal protein (meat, fish, eggs, etc.) without reducing energy intake by increasing the amount of carbohydrates and/or fats.
- Control your blood pressure, it decreases renal function's rate of deterioration and loss of albumin through urine.
- Perform physical exercise, decrease salt content in your meals, reduce alcohol consumption and take your medication.
- Avoid smoking.
- If there are obesity problems, reduce your weight, but not so quickly.
- Control your cholesterol level or coagulation disorders.
- Get systemic treatment for any urinary infection.

Advanced renal insufficiency

When kidney disease progresses, symptoms are: malaise, hypertension and high urea concentration.

High creatinine, potassium and uric acid levels, among others.

When creatinine levels begin to rise, the adoption of therapeutic measures as indicated by the nephrologist is essential.

It can be treated through dialysis, which replaces the purification function of the kidneys (hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis).