

Medical Glossary

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ACEI (*angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitor*)

A class of drug that reduces blood pressure levels, and may be especially helpful for people with CKD. Names end in '-opril'.

Acute

Short-term and or rapid onset, usually requiring a rapid response.

Anaemia

A shortage of red blood cells in the body, causing tiredness, shortage of breath and pale skin. Anaemia may be treated with EPO if the haemoglobin level is below 11 g/dL.

ARB(angiotensin receptor blocker). A class of drug that reduces blood pressure levels, and may be especially helpful in people with CKD. Names end in '-sartan'.

Arteries

Blood vessels that carry blood from the heart to the rest of the body.

BP

Abbreviation for blood pressure.

Calcium

Mineral important throughout the body, especially in bones. Blood level may fall as the kidneys fail to produce activated vitamin D in CKD Stages 4 and 5.

Catheter

A flexible plastic tube used to enter the interior of the body. Different types of catheter may be used for dialysis or to drain urine from the bladder.

Cholesterol

A fatty substance, one of several different types of fat found in the body. If blood vessels are damaged, cholesterol can be deposited, eventually causing narrowing.

Chronic

Present for at least 3 months and of slow onset, not usually requiring immediate action. It does not necessarily mean severe.

CKD

Abbreviation for chronic kidney disease.

Clearance

The removal of the toxic waste products of food from the body. Clearance is one of the two main functions of the kidneys. In CKD, clearance is reduced and toxins from food build up in the blood.

Creatinine

A waste substance produced by the muscles. The higher the blood creatinine level, the worse the kidneys are working. The blood creatinine level is used to calculate the eGFR, a more accurate measure of kidney function.

Diastolic Blood Pressure

A blood pressure reading taken when the heart is relaxed. It is the second figure in a blood pressure measurement.

eGFR (*Estimated glomerular filtration rate*)

Measurement of kidney function, calculated from the blood level of creatinine. The eGFR defines the Stage of CKD.

EPO (*Erythropoietin*)

A hormone made by the kidneys, which stimulates the bone marrow to produce red blood cells.

ESA (*Erythropoiesis-stimulating agent*)

A substance which is used for the treatment of anaemia.

Glomerulus

The filtering part in the kidney, about the size of a pinhead.

Glomerulonephritis

Disease of the glomerulus.

Hb (*Haemoglobin*)

A substance in red blood cells that carries oxygen around the body. A low Hb level indicates anaemia.

Hormone

A chemical messenger that travels around the body in the blood and controls how other parts of the body work.

Hypertension

High blood pressure.

mmol/L

Abbreviation for millimoles per litre. A unit used to measure the blood levels of many substances.

Creatinine is measured in smaller units called micromoles per litre (p.mol/L or micromol/L).

Nephrologist

A doctor who specialises in kidney disease, dialysis and transplantation.

PCR (*Protein-creatinine ratio*)

A measurement of the level of protein in the urine.

Phosphate

A mineral that helps calcium to strengthen the bones. Phosphate is obtained from foods such as dairy products, nuts and meat. In CKD Stages 4 and 5, phosphate tends to build up in the blood and the intake in the diet may need to be restricted.

Reprinted from the National Kidney Federation's (UK) CKD Health Check brochure.

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