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March is National Kidney Month
National Kidney Foundation of Michigan encourages residents to get tested

Ann Arbor, Mich. – (February 10, 2010) – The National Kidney Foundation of Michigan (NKFM) is celebrating National Kidney Month this March, and World Kidney Day on March 11, 2010, by encouraging residents to get tested and understand their risk factors for chronic kidney disease.

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) does not discriminate. It is an under-diagnosed, under-treated, yet treatable disease.

Due to the increasing prevalence of obesity, hypertension and diabetes, CKD has emerged as a major health threat to Michigan residents. More than 900,000 Michigan adults are estimated to be living with the disease and 12,000 patients undergo dialysis for kidney failure. In addition, more than 2,300 Michigan residents are waiting for a lifesaving kidney transplant.

“Most people with kidney disease are not diagnosed until late in the course of the illness when there are few opportunities for prevention,” said Dan Carney, President and CEO of the NKFM. “Kidney disease is common and harmful but treatable. There is now strong evidence that early detection, altering lifestyle factors, and aggressively controlling blood pressure, not only slow down the progression of CKD to kidney failure but can also significantly reduce the incidence of cardiovascular disease that leads to premature death in the majority of these patients.”

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More than 70 percent of kidney failure cases caused by diabetes or high blood pressure may have been prevented or delayed with proper treatment and lifestyle changes. Those with uncontrolled high blood pressure, diabetes or a blood relative with kidney disease should make an appointment to get their kidneys checked as soon as possible.

Those who aren't at risk should take health precautions to keep their risk of kidney failure low. Eating healthy, well-balanced meals, exercising regularly, quitting smoking, and monitoring your blood pressure are all ways to reduce the risk of kidney disease.

More than 26 million Americans have chronic kidney disease and most of them don't even know it. For more information on preventing and treating kidney disease, or to find National Kidney Month activities near you, call the NKFM at (800) 482-1455, visit www.nkfm.org, or visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/KidneyMI.

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