

Media Alert

Health Minister Joins Students for Healthy Lifestyle Learning To Help Prevent Kidney Disease

The incidence of end stage kidney disease for Indigenous peoples is especially high in remote and very remote areas of Australia, with rates up to 20 times higher than those for all Australians.

World Kidney Day Kidney Disease and Children Better Knowledge. Better Care.

Media Invitation to St Mary's Catholic Primary School 3 Lindsay Street, Darwin, 12noon Wednesday 9 March 2016

St Mary's Catholic Primary school in Darwin will be the focus of World Kidney Day education at 12 noon on Wednesday 9 March 2016 with a visit to the classroom from Health Minister Hon John Wessel Elferink to talk with students about the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle in childhood.

In a joint national communique for World Kidney Day 10 March 2016, Chairman of the Australian and New Zealand Paediatric Nephrology Association Dr Joshua Kausman and Managing Director of Kidney Health Australia Anne Wilson said there is a need to improve kidney health knowledge, patient care and also to reduce risk factors.

Dr Kausman said, 'Obesity and high blood pressure are major risks for the development of many health complications in adulthood including kidney disease, but often have their origins in childhood.'

'It is a priority to enable children to develop sustainable health promoting lifestyles early in life to help prevent chronic disease later in life.'

Representing Kidney Health Australia, was Professor Alan Cass Director of Menzies School of Health Research and President of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Nephrology. Professor Cass is an Australian kidney specialist with extensive experience in Indigenous health.

Professor Cass said the Australian community and the Australian health system is facing major challenges given that around **90% of the 1.7 million Australians who have indicators of chronic kidney disease may be unaware they have a potentially life threatening disease.**

Key issues for reducing the risk of developing chronic kidney disease for Indigenous Australians are healthy lifestyles, healthy food supply, addressing the social determinants of health and improving the coordination of health services for the prevention and management of chronic disease.

In 2012-13, 1 in 5 (20%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged ≥18 years had indicators of Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). With kidney disease often having no symptoms, many people with CKD may not be aware they have it.

The incidence of end stage kidney disease, when dialysis or a kidney transplant is needed, for Indigenous peoples is especially high in remote and very remote areas of Australia, with rates up to 20 times higher than for all Australians.

Although Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represent less than 2.5% of the national population, they account for almost 1 in 10 people commencing kidney replacement therapy each year.

Early detection and treatment can slow progression, or even reverse kidney damage.

A healthy lifestyle from a young age can reduce the risks of preventable kidney damage.

Kidney Health Australia has released ***Kidney Disease and Children, Better Knowledge, Better Care*** national schools' resources to every school in Australia from Kidney Health Australia's website www.kidney.org.au. [HERE](#)

One in three adult Australians is at an increased risk of developing chronic kidney disease. You are at risk if you have diabetes, high blood pressure, established heart problems (heart failure or heart attack) and/or have had a stroke, a family history of kidney failure, are obese, smoke, are aged 60 years or older, are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, or have a history of acute kidney injury.

World Kidney Day is a global awareness campaign aimed at raising awareness of the importance of our kidneys to our overall health and to reduce the frequency and impact of kidney disease and its associated health problems worldwide. All across the globe many hundred events take place from public screenings in Argentina to Zumba marathons in Malaysia. We do it all to create awareness about preventive behaviours, risk factors, and how to live with a kidney disease. We do this because we want kidney health for all.

For more information on World Kidney Day in Australia visit kidney.org.au.

Kidney Health Australia, formerly the Australian Kidney Foundation, is a national health care charity with a vision 'to save and improve the lives of Australians affected by kidney disease'. As the national peak body, Kidney Health Australia promotes good kidney health through delivery of programs in education, advocacy, research and support.

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