

Show your Kidneys love!

New campaign for kidney health

That little bit of high blood pressure isn't so bad after all? It sure is! It may be the beginning of the end for kidney health. The numbers are alarming: by 2040, chronic kidney disease (CKD) is expected to be the fifth leading cause of death if prevention and treatment do not change.

Worldwide, 700 to 800 million people already suffer from the disease, including 1 in 7 Europeans. Many of these patients are undiagnosed as symptoms only appear when the disease is at an advanced stage, yet survival is affected from the very beginning. Kidney disease should be seen as a silent killer.

A broad-based campaign to mark World Kidney Day on March 9, jointly led by the European Kidney Health Alliance, the Dutch Kidney Foundation, the European Kidney Patients' Federation, the European Dialysis and Transplant Nurses Association/European Renal Care Association, the European Renal Association and the International Society of Nephrology is drawing special attention to the causes, prevention options, and diagnostics of chronic kidney disease. A prominent supporter of the campaign is world star Tina Turner, whom herself suffers from kidney failure due to poorly treated high blood pressure. She says, "I put myself in great danger because I refused to face the reality that I needed daily, lifelong therapy with medication. I believed for far too long that my body was an untouchable and indestructible bastion."

Tina Turner's kidney disease story is part of the awareness campaign and will be available to read on the specially created website showyourkidneyslove.com. Here, patients, interested individuals and policymakers can learn about kidney function and CKD, risk factors, prevention options, as well as recommended EU policy actions. The goal is to increase awareness of how important the kidneys are in the overall human complex and the great harm that underlying diseases such as inadequately treated hypertension and diabetes cause. Regrettably, awareness of CKD is dramatically low in EU policymakers, despite coming at a high societal cost. Therefore, the campaign also includes recommendations for EU policymakers on CKD prevention and screening, with the firm intention to mitigate the disease's burden.

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