



# Top 10 Key Patient Messages

## 2026 Guideline for Cardiovascular-Kidney-Metabolic Syndrome (CKM Syndrome)

- 1. CKM health stands for cardiovascular (heart and blood vessels), kidney and metabolic health (the way your body creates, stores and uses energy).** These three body systems are connected closely and often affect each other. Holistic CKM care means taking care of all three together rather than treating each system separately.  
  
CKM health can be affected by lifestyle and environment, including factors such as daily habits, stress, access to care and the spaces where you live and work. Talking openly with a healthcare professional can help you better understand your personal risk and explore meaningful changes that fit your life and feel doable over time.
- 2. CKM syndrome refers to several health conditions that are connected – heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, obesity and diabetes.** These connections mean that heart disease risk goes beyond the heart. Understanding that everything in your body is connected helps you and your healthcare team think about your overall health beyond individual conditions.
- 3. As CKM syndrome progresses, risk increases for more serious health conditions, such as:**
  - [Pre-heart failure/Heart failure](#)
  - [Heart attack](#)
  - [Stroke](#)
  - [Kidney disease](#), which may lead to kidney failure
  - [Peripheral artery disease](#), (reduced blood flow to the legs)
  - [Atrial fibrillation](#) (irregular heart rhythm), which can increase the chance of having a [stroke](#)
  - Early death or disability
- 4. CKM syndrome is grouped into four stages to describe how serious it is. A person's CKM syndrome stage is based on medical tests** that show how well the kidneys, heart and metabolic system are working. Higher stages mean more serious health conditions. A person's stage can change over time as their health improves or worsens. [Learn more about CKM syndrome stages here.](#)
- 5. People can shift between stages** as their health conditions get better or worse. If detected early enough, and with appropriate care, some organ damage can be stopped or even reversed. Your healthcare professional can help review what actions are right for you and your health.

6. **CKM syndrome affects multiple systems in the body**, so care often involves multiple health professionals, each focusing on different aspects of heart, kidney, and metabolic health. A team-based approach helps ensure coordinated, timely, and comprehensive care. [Learn more about the CKM care team here.](#)
7. **Screening is needed to check your CKM health** because conditions often **have few or no symptoms. Act early to prevent, stop or reverse CKM syndrome progression.** Don't wait for a medical emergency or serious health condition to get screened or make healthy changes.

Important medical tests for CKM health include:

- Blood pressure checks
- Lipid panels (cholesterol/triglyceride test)
- Weight and waist circumference measurements
- Blood sugar testing (blood glucose test)
- Kidney health tests (UACR and eGFR)

These tests can help healthcare professionals determine whether CKM syndrome is present and identify the appropriate stage.

Also, your family medical history may show whether you have a higher chance of developing CKM syndrome. If you can, share your health history with healthcare professionals so they can help you to better understand your risk.

Talk to a healthcare professional about health actions, goals or treatment that can help prevent, stop or reverse CKM syndrome.



8. **CKM healthcare may include a combination of approaches** depending on your CKM syndrome stage and personal health. These approaches include lifestyle changes, medications and, in some cases, procedures or surgery. Having ongoing conversations with your healthcare team can help you understand what best aligns with your goals and health needs. [Learn more here.](#)
9. **Having certain health conditions can affect your risk of developing CKM syndrome and the treatment of CKM syndrome.** [Learn more about related health conditions here.](#)
10. **Your health needs can change over time, and your CKM syndrome treatment plan may shift along the way to better support you.** It can help to check in with your healthcare professionals at each visit to understand what's changing and why.

Staying connected through these conversations can help keep your care aligned with your goals and what matters most to you. Taking time to ask questions and talk through updates can make each next step feel clearer and more manageable.