



# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: AMERICAN KIDNEY FUND

## Million Hearts® in Action

[ Strategies for Achieving Million Hearts® Goals ]



The American Kidney Fund (AKF) fights kidney disease and works on behalf of the 37 million Americans living with kidney disease, and the millions more at risk, with an unmatched scope of programs that support people wherever they are in their fight against kidney disease—from prevention through post-transplant living.

AKF fosters kidney disease prevention and early detection in at-risk individuals and communities. AKF enables all people with kidney disease to live their healthiest lives through disease management education, award-winning public and professional health education materials, courses and webinars. AKF drives innovation through strategic partnerships and investment in clinical research to improve patient outcomes and fights tirelessly for legislation and health policy to improve the lives of kidney patients.

High blood pressure is the second-leading cause of kidney failure, and what led AKF to become a member of the Million Hearts® Collaboration. Cardiovascular and renal health are tightly linked, with heart disease being both a cause and a complication of kidney disease.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, hyperkalemia and anemia are common complications with kidney disease patients; both conditions can add stress on the cardiovascular system.

AKF programs and campaigns help kidney patients understand these linkages to prevent cardiovascular complications. The [AKF Kidney Kitchen](#) highlights the heart-kidney connection providing nutritional information, recipes and coaching on healthy eating for chronic kidney disease. Many of the recipes and how-to videos highlight low sodium recipes and other healthy eating strategies to lower blood pressure and help manage phosphorus and carbohydrates. Kidney Kitchen was awarded a Gold 2019 Marcom Award in Digital Media.

[AKF's Act on Anemia campaign](#) aims to increase awareness of anemia, a common complication of patients managing chronic kidney disease. Since anemia can occur more often in patients who have diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease, AKF created in-depth educational materials and social media campaigns. These campaigns include information on self-measured blood pressure monitoring and nutrition.

[AKF's Know Your Kidneys campaign](#) aims to increase early diagnosis and slow the progression of kidney disease, particularly through the management of hypertension and diabetes. This comprehensive program forges strong community partnership to provide outreach, screenings and educational programs. Kidney Action Days have been presented in several cities, most recently San Jose, Memphis and Houston. Though live events for 2020 have been canceled because of COVID-19, *Know Your Kidneys* has shifted to virtual events and continues to expand vital educational resources for patients and those at risk.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kidneyfund.org/news/news-releases/akf-to-host-cdc-million-hearts-collaboration-biannual-meeting-spotlighting-connection-between-kidney-disease-and-heart-disease.html>