Chronic kidney disease

nature
REVIEWS

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Competing interests
PR, GR, AL, KJJ, MT, CW, and HJA declare no competing financial interest.
RG declares competing financial interest as follows: Speaker honoraria from Genentech; Consultancy honoraria from Bristol Myers Squibb (Abatacept for Lupus or FSGS, Chemocentryx (Avacopan for vasculitis), Retrophin (Sparsentan for FSGS); Compensated Editorial Tasks - Wolters-Kluwer (UpToDate, Editor), Karger (American Journal of Nephrology), American Society of Nephrology (NephSAP, Editor); Stock Ownership- Reata.
ZM declares competing financial interest as follows: Grants for CKD REIN and other research projects from Amgen, Baxter, Fresenius Medical Care, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck Sharp and Dohme-Chibret, Sanofi-Genzyme, Lilly, Otsuka and the French government, as well as personal fees, and grants to charities from Amgen, Bayer, and Sanofi-Genzyme .

Abstract

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is defined by persistent urinary abnormalities or impaired excretory renal function. While progression to end stage kidney disease (ESKD) is a concern, the majority of those with CKD are at risk for accelerated cardiovascular disease and death. For those that do reach ESKD the limited accessibility to kidney replacement therapy is a problem in many locations worldwide.. Risk factors for CKD include low nephron number at birth and nephron loss due to increasing age or acute and chronic kidney injuries. For example, the pandemic of obesity and type 2 diabetes largely accounts for the increasing global prevalence of CKD and there is an increasing awareness of genetic causes for CKD and accelerated CKD progression. The management of CKD is focused on early detection or prevention, treatment of the root cause if possible, and attention to secondary processes which contribute to ongoing nephron loss, i.e. remnant nephron hyperfiltration. Blood pressure control and inhibition of the renin-angiotensin system are the corner stones of therapy. CKD complications such as CKD complications such as anemia, metabolic acidosis, and secondary hyperparathyroidism impact cardiovascular health, as well as quality of life, and so require diagnosis and therapy. Primary prevention of CKD, early diagnosis, and secondary prevention of CKD progression are needed to reduce cardiovascular disease, CKD-related morbidity, and to prevent ESKD, whether or not kidney replacement therapies are available.

[H1] Introduction

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is a syndrome defined as persistent alterations in kidney structure, function or both with implications for health [1]. Examples of structural abnormalities include cysts, tumors, malformations or atrophy, which become evident by imaging. By contrast, kidney dysfunction can become evident as hypertension, edema, growth delay in children, and changes in output or quality of urine; these changes are most often recognized by increased serum levels of creatinine, cystatin C or blood urea nitrogen. The most common pathological manifestation,

regardless of the initiating insult or disease, of CKD is some form of renal fibrosis.

The Kidney Disease Improving Global Outcomes (KDIGO) initiative classifies an individual as having CKD if abnormalities of kidney structure or function persist for >3 months. KDIGO describes a classification system based on severity, into numerous stages of CKD using a two dimensional matrix based on estimated or measured glomerular filtration rate (eGFR, mGFR) and on extent of albuminuria (FIG. 1) [1]. Primary care settings often do not assess albuminuria but proteinuria via dip stick analysis, but dip stick +, ++, and +++ usually approximates with the three albuminuria stages. GFR and albuminuria/proteinuria are used to classify CKD because GFR is a well-established marker of renal excretory function and albuminuria is an indicator of renal barrier dysfunction, i.e. glomerular injury. Both have found to be reliable predictors of long term CKD outcomes

As the kidney is formed by many independent functional and anatomical 'units', the nephrons GFR, can be expressed by the equation: $GFR_{(Total)} = GFR_{(single\ nephron)} \times$ number of nephrons. This implies that when the number of nephrons declines, total GFR will not change as long as single nephrons can increase their individual GFR (known as single-nephron GFR (SNGFR). Vice versa, a decline in total GFR implies a significant loss of nephrons with remnant nephrons probably operating at their maximum possible SNGFR. That is, CKD can be thought of generally as a loss of functional nephrons but usually represents loss in nephron number. Furthermore, the KDIGO stages are derived from large databases of general, high risk and nephrology populations. The categories define risk of progression to ESKD that is defined as G5 (GFR <15 mL/min/1.73 $m^{2)}$ and a number of other outcomes including risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD), death, AKI, infections, and hospitalizations. The KDIGO staging has proven to be very instrumental in decision making on patient management.

Whether CKD should be diagnosed and staged using absolute thresholds irrespective of age remains controversial [2, 3]. The mGFR in healthy adults aged 20-40 years is about 107 ml/min/1.73 m^2 and declines at a rate of about 0.7 ml/min/1.73 m^2 per year [4, 5]. By age 75 years, many otherwise healthy individuals (without significant co-morbidity) will have lost

50% of their nephrons and their GFR that was present at age 25 years [6]. A substantial number of older healthy individuals have eGFR <60 ml/min/1.73 m^2 and no abnormal albuminuria (KDIGO CKD G3a A1) meeting the KDIGO criteria for CKD albeit having only a small increase in relative risk of all-cause mortality [7, 8]. The threshold of GFR that should be used to detect CKD in younger persons is equally controversial [9]. The upper and lower limits for mGFR in a 25 year old healthy person being considered as a living kidney donor is about 136 to 78 ml/min/1.73 m^2 respectively [5]; some have suggested that a threshold of <75 ml/min/1.73 m^2 would be more appropriate for young adults, and values below this threshold are associated with a significantly increased relative risk of all-cause mortality and ESKD [10].

The etiology of the impaired kidney function is important, and thus in addition to classifying the severity of CKD by GFR and albumin levels, understanding the risk factors or causes of CKD is essential (Box 1), and recommended by the guidelines [1]. In this Primer, we discuss the global prevalence of CKD, the different diseases underlying poor nephron endowment or nephron loss, the pathophysiology of CKD progression, the diagnosis, screening, and prevention of CKD, and CKD management to improve outcomes and quality of life. Finally, we name several research domains potentially offering improvements for CKD management in the near future.

[H1] Epidemiology

Rates of age-standardized death and disability due to most non-communicable diseases have decreased over the past 20 years, but such favourable trends are not present for CKD. The Global Burden of Disease study reports indicate an increase burden of CKD (with substantial worldwide variation) to which diabetes mellitus seems to be the most important contributor [11-13]. CKD as a cause of mortality has increases over the last 25 years from 21st to 13th', and now contributes 1.35% of the global burden of disability life years lost, growing at a rate of 1% per annum [11, 13, 14]. Note that most prevalence data are based on levels of GFR only, without consideration of albuminuria, based on the first CKD classification system reported in 2002.

124

125 **[H2] Prevalence**

126 CKD stage G3–5 prevalence in adults varies worldwide, with values reported as 1.7% in China
127 [15], 3.1% in Canada [16], 5.8% in Australia [17] and 6.7% in the USA [18]. In Europe the range is slightly
128 narrower: from 2.3% in Germany [19], 2.4% in Finland [20], 4.0% in Spain [20] to 5.2% in England [21]. Such
129 numbers should be viewed with caution because they are often based on a single eGFR assessment
130 (that is not considering the actual definition, which includes the factor of time (present for >3 mo;
131 thus it is possible that positive "CKD cases" may overestimate the true prevalence of CKD [22]. The
132 epidemiology of CKD in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) is poorly characterized due to the
133 lack of community-based studies, inconsistent assessment of kidney function and non-standardized
134 or non-calibrated approaches[23]. Nevertheless, in South-East Asia, some Latin American countries
135 (such as Mexico) and in sub-Saharan Africa, when assessed, the prevalence of CKD appears to be
136 consistent with the estimates of 10-16% [23-25].

137

138 **[H2] Risk factors**

139 CKD is more common in people over 65 but the probability of progression to ESKD is higher in
140 younger people with CKD, albeit sometimes over long period of times [26]. Interestingly,while the
141 prevalence of CKD is higher in women than in men, men are more likely to progress to ESKD [26]. The
142 most common underlying diseases are diabetes mellitus and hypertension, particularly in in high and
143 middle income countries. In those with diabetes, CKD prevalence is estimated in 30- 40%. Whether
144 this is due to diabetes per se or due to microvascular disease is not known. However, in LMICs, CKD
145 is often due to infectious diseases and glomerulonephritis (a group of diseases that lead to
146 inflammation of the glomerulus) [27]. Current and future changes in socio-economic circumstances and
147 population age distributions will increase the absolute number of people with CKD in these countries,
148 where numbers of elderly persons are rising, and with increasing diabetes and obesity epidemic, may
149 change the cause of CKD in those populations as well. Furthermore, low birth weight is associated

150 with CKD later in life; the global risks of preterm birth and low birth weight are around 10% and 15%,
151 respectively. Thus, millions of children are born at risk of CKD later in life and are found at the lower
152 percentile of age-matched GFR [28, 29]. Specific populations are at higher risk for CKD, in part due to
153 genetic factors, and others due to interaction of genetic and environmental factors. Those groups at
154 higher risk include, in alphabetical order: Aboriginal Australians, African Americans, Hispanics,
155 indigenous populations in Canada, South Asians, Oriental Asians, and Pacific Islanders.

156 Endemic forms of CKD suggest regional triggers, which are often difficult to define among
157 potential candidates such as specific infections, toxins, behaviours or climate-related factors [30].
158 Reports of chronic interstitial nephritis or CKD of undetermined origin (CKDu) in sugar cane and other
159 agricultural workers in Latin America, Sri Lanka, India, and more recently in Cameroon, Mexico, and
160 Australia, are examples of this [30-32].

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162 [H2] Children

163 Little is known about CKD in children because of the absence of registries, and that they are not
164 included in many clinical studies. In Europe, the 2014 incidence of paediatric ESKD was 5.7 per million
165 age-related population (pmarp) in children aged 0-14 years and the prevalence 32.2 pmarp [33]. Earlier
166 estimates suggested the incidence and prevalence were 8.3 pmarp and 58 pmarp, respectively, in
167 children aged 0-19 years [34], which is lower than 14.7 pmarp and 103.9 pmarp for the age group 0-21
168 years in the United States [35]. In high income countries, congenital disorders are responsible for the
169 majority of cases of paediatric CKD; by contrast, in acquired causes, such as infection and glomerular
170 diseases, predominate in LMICs [36].

171171

172 [H2] Kidney replacement

173 Understanding the information on kidney replacement therapy in the context of CKD is important for
174 identifying gaps and focusing on solutions to those gaps [37]. Often countries do not know the number
175 of patients with prevalent CKD but do have information on dialysis numbers. Given that not all

176 people progress to ESKD, estimates of those with CKD can be extrapolated; conversely if CKD rates
177 are known then numbers on dialysis can reveal inequities in availability of dialysis. Data on the
178 incidence of kidney replacement therapy for ESKD can only be obtained from countries with dialysis
179 registries. Data are missing in particular from LMICs, where such registries do not exist. In 2014,
180 incidence of kidney replacement therapy varied from 49 per million population (pmp) in Bangladesh
181 to as high as 455 pmp in Taiwan [38]. The majority of patients started kidney replacement therapy on
182 dialysis, because pre-emptive transplantation as an initial modality is not freely available. Kidney
183 transplant rates differed substantially by country from 1 pmp in Bangladesh to 60 pmp in Jalisco
184 (Mexico). There was also huge variation in the prevalence of kidney replacement therapy (FIG. 2):
185 from 113 pmp in Bangladesh to 3,219 pmp in Taiwan [38].

186 In many European countries, more than half of all kidney replacement therapy patients are
187 transplant recipients [38]. This is in contrast to the situation in some Asian countries like Taiwan, Japan
188 and the Philippines where kidney transplantation is hardly performed [38]. There are multiple reasons
189 why transplantation is not available despite the availability of expensive dialysis services: cultural,
190 socioeconomic and health care infrastructure deficiencies (lack of biopsy services, lack of surgeons,
191 lack of immunology laboratories) account for many of these. Existence of available dialysis and
192 transplant services has not been systematically documented; however the Global Kidney Health Atlas
193 [[38]; full report at *www.theisn.org*] describes availability of kidney replacement therapy worldwide.
194 Note that the registry data for dialysis and transplantation described above does not reflect the true
195 need for kidney replacement therapy, which may account for the wide variability in incidence and
196 prevalence. Estimates of unmet need vary from 2 to 7 million people per year [39]. Note that
197 availability and accessibility are not the same, and even when services ae available in a country or
198 region, not all individuals may have access to them (depending on cost reimbursement, demand, and
199199 specific policies).
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201201

202

203 **[H1]Mechanisms/pathophysiology**

204 **[H2] Nephron loss and compensation**

205 In humans, nephrons are generated from the 12th-36th week of gestation with a mean
206 number of 950,000 per kidney in a range from approximately 200,000 to >2.5 million [40]. No new
207 nephrons can form upon injury and, during growth from childhood to adulthood, the available
208 nephrons increase in size to accommodate increased renal demands. However, as people age, GFR
209 declines (FIG. 3). Although nephrons can deal with transient increases in filtration load (such as upon
210 food and fluid intake) by transient increases in SNGFR ("renal reserve") [41, 42], longer or persistent
211 increases in body mass (for example, during pregnancy or obesity) promote nephron hypertrophy as
212 the compensatory mechanism. Any injury- (or kidney donation-)related nephron loss may have the
213 same effect (FIG. 4). Indeed, either severe kidney injury or combinations of injury with ageing-related
214 nephron losses — especially in individuals with poor nephron endowment and/or obesity —
215 accelerates persistent increased SNGFR and loss of remnant nephrons[43].

216 Remnant nephron hypertrophy is triggered by persistent elevations of SNGFR and filtration
217 pressure (that is, glomerular hypertension) across the glomerular filtration barrier, which implies
218 glomerular hyperfiltration. Specifically, glomerular hyperfiltration and hypertension together
219 promote the release of tumour growth factor-alpha/epithelial growth factor receptor [44, 45], leading to
220 nephron hypertrophy that reduces glomerular hypertension by increasing filtration surface [46].
221 Indeed, increased SNGFR and remnant nephron hypertrophy allows kidney donors to maintain an
222 apparently "normal" renal function, despite lacking 50% of nephrons. Obviously, kidney donation
223 does not necessarily cause CKD progression when donors are carefully selected for good nephron
224 endowment, the absence of obesity, diabetes, and ongoing nephron injury [47, 48]. However, in other
225 circumstances, hyperfiltration-driven increases in glomerular dimensions can potentially be harmful
226 [42, 46, 49-51]. Beyond a certain threshold of hypertrophy, increasing podocyte (which are key octopus-
227 shaped cells that maintain the glomerular filtration barrier of the nephron shear stress promotes

228 podocyte detachment, focal segmental glomerulosclerosis (FSGS, a pathological entity in which renal
229 injury results in sclerotic lesions in segments of glomeruli), global glomerulosclerosis and subsequent
230 nephron atrophy, a vicious cycle further reducing nephron number and the SNGFR of remnant
231 nephrons (FIG. 5) [44, 46,52-55].
232

233 [H2] Impaired glomerular filtration and fibrosis

234 Persistent podocyte hypertrophy and glomerular hyperfiltration, maintained by angiotensin II
235 production, ultimately aggravate podocyte loss and proteinuria, eventually impacting on glomerular
236 filtration Angiotensin-II, a peptide hormone that is part of the renin-angiotensin system (RAS) and
237 drives vasoconstriction and aldosterone secretion (and thus sodium retention and an increase of
238 blood pressure) directly impairs the glomerular barrier sieving function, possibly via inhibiting
239 expression of the podocyte protein nephrin, a structural component of the slit diaphragm necessary
240 for maintaining the glomerular filtration barrierindependently of its hemodynamic effects [56].
241 Angiotensin-II possibly also contributes to the dysregulated response of parietal epithelial cell
242 precursors along Bowman`s capsule, generating FSGS lesions instead of replacing lost podocytes [57].
243 This structural remodelling of the glomerular tuft barrier presents clinically as proteinuria.
244 Proteinuria not only serves as a marker for nephron damage but also predicts CKD progression [44, 58,
245 59]. Mechanistically, albuminuria also impairs the capacity of parietal epithelial cells to regenerate
246 podocytes [44], instead further promoting the formation of FSGS lesions (FIG. 5) [60, 61].
247247
248 CKD progression also involves non-specific wound healing responses including interstitial fibrosis.
249 Albuminuria and complement, and infiltrating immune cells activate proximal tubular epithelial cells
250 to induce the secretion of and pro-fibrotic mediators followed by interstitial inflammation and
251 fibrosis [62]. Interstitial fibrosis is frequently considered as an additional factor driving further nephron
252 injury, e.g. via promoting renal ischemia [62] but, as in other organs, scar formation may also be
253 essential to mechanically stabilize the remaining nephrons [63]. The increased tubular transport

workload of remnant nephrons also involves anaerobic metabolism, intracellular acidosis, and endoplasmic reticulum stress — all promoting secondary tubular cell injury [44, 60].

[H2]Risk factors

Several factors can contribute to the pathogenesis of CKD, including low birth weight, pregnancy, obesity, diabetes, and ageing. Each of these scenarios contributes different factors that lead to and/or exacerbate nephron loss, promoting the cycles of injury and ultimately resulting in kidney failure.

[H3]Prematurity and low birth weight.

Newborns with low birth weight (owing to preterm birth or intrauterine growth restriction) frequently display incomplete kidney development [64-66]. Depending on the severity of prematurity, poor nephron endowment can cause either early childhood CKD or CKD later in life [64-70]. The associated risk was estimated among US adolescents for every 13 individuals born at low birth weight, one had reduced GFR and one had raised systolic blood pressure, and this risk increases with age [29]**.** The risk of low birth weight infants (<2599 g) to experience CKD up to the age of 17 is fourfold increased compared to infants with a birth weight of >2500 g (FIG.3B) [69]. CKD onset at puberty is common in these individuals when rapid body growth exceeds the capacity of nephron number to accommodate the increasing filtration load[71]. In milder cases, poor nephron endowment at birth promotes the development of hypertension, CKD later in adults or a faster progression of glomerulonephritis to ESKD (FIG.3C) [29, 66, 70, 72, 73]. All of these factors increase the risk of cardiovascular disease.

[H3]Genetic factors.

Congenital abnormalities of the kidney and the urinary tract (CAKUT) are the most common congenital abnormalities [74]. CAKUT present a wide spectrum of causes for kidney hypodysplasia,

280 imparting low nephron number and risk of CKD later in life[75, 76]. Genetic testing has revealed that
281 ~20% of early-onset CKD (defined as CKD manifesting before 25 years of age) cases can be attributed
282 to a monogenic cause [77]. Beyond CAKUT, these conditions include ciliopathies, cystic kidney diseases,
283 tubulopathies, and podocytopathies causing FSGS [75-78].

284 Until recently, monogenic causes of CKD were mostly reported in children or adolescents, but
285 genetic variants also contribute as co-factors to CKD progression in adults (FIG. 4). For example, an
286 *UMOD* gene variant, present on 17% of the alleles in the general population, is associated with CKD
287 [79-81]. Another example is gene variants of apolipoprotein L1 (*APOL1*) in African Americans, which
288 confer resistance to *Trypanosoma brucei* infections in sub-Saharan Africa [82]. However, these variants
289 affect endosomal trafficking and autophagic flux, which ultimately leads to podocyte loss,
290 glomerulosclerosis, nephron loss, and CKD progression [83, 84]. This may explain faster CKD progression
291 in many patients with sub-Saharan ancestry [82].

292292

293 [H3]Obesity.

294 A larger glomerular size on mildly obese (BMI>30 and <35) but otherwise healthy individuals suggests
295 an increased SNGFR [85]. In general, the association between obesity and poorer renal outcomes
296 persists even after adjustments for higher blood pressure and diabetes mellitus, suggesting that
297 obesity-driven glomerular hyperfiltration directly contributes to nephron loss [86, 87]. Severe obesity
298 alone or moderate obesity in combination with other factors such as genetic, low nephron number
299 or aging can lead to development of proteinuria, secondary FSGS, and progressive CKD (FIG. 4) [86, 88-91].

300300

301 [H3]Pregnancy.

302 The latter trimester of pregnancy involves volume expansion (that is, an increase in blood volume)
303 causing an increase of total GFR by 50% [92], implying a respective increase of SNGFR. These
304 physiological adaptations are transient and without consequences in women with normal nephron
305 number. However, in women with low nephron endowment or previous injury-related CKD (such as

306 in women with lupus nephritis), pregnancy-related glomerular hyperfiltration exacerbates remnant
307 nephron glomerular hyperfiltration and hypertrophy. In some patients, final trimester pregnancy-
308 related glomerular hyperfiltration then passes the threshold of compensation and triggers rapid CKD
309 progression presenting with proteinuria and hypertension — a condition known as eclampsia. Pre-
310 existing CKD G3A2 or higher, obesity, excessive body weight increase during pregnancy are well-
311 known risk-factors for eclampsia [93].

312312

313 [H3]Diabetes.

314 Diabetes is a well-known condition associated with massive glomerular hyperfiltration, evident from
315 increased total GFR and renomegaly [51]. Hyperglycemia promotes the sodium-glucose transporter
316 (SGLT)-2-driven reabsorption of sodium in the proximal tubule, a process that subsequently
317 inactivates tubuloglomerular feedback and activates the RAS at the *macula densa* [94, 95]. The result is
318 induction of a permanent dilation of the afferent arteriole and vasoconstriction of the efferent
319 arteriole — permanently increasing SNGFR and total GFR [96].

320 Although diabetes-driven glomerular hyperfiltration can be compensated for many years in
321 younger patients with normal nephron number, it serves as a drastic accelerator single nephron
322 hyperfiltration such as patients with low nephron endowment, injury- or ageing-related nephron
323 loss, obesity or those who are pregnant [97]. Unfortunately, this is a highly prevalent combination of
324 risk factors in older patients with type 2 diabetes, for which dual SGLT2/RAS inhibition can elicit
325 potent nephroprotective effects [98].

326326

327 [H3]Acute kidney injury.

328 Acute kidney injury (AKI) is a clinical syndrome defined by an acute deterioration of renal function
329 resulting in the accumulation of metabolic waste and toxins, subsequent uremic complications, and
330 potentially failure of other organs [99]. AKI is highly prevalent in hospitalized patients and can imply
331 irreversible losses in nephron number[100]. In Western countries AKI occurs in both outpatient and

332 inpatient settings, the latter of which is simpler to document, and has been the focus of multiple
333 papers describing the phenomenon and aiding in the understanding of the strong association
334 between AKI and CKD. The causes of non hopsital/institutuion-based AKI are diarrhea, infections,
335 dehydration, medications, while in hospital it can be attributed to these same factors and exposures
336 to nephrotoxins (dye) and is mostly observed in patients with multiple morbidities [101]. By contrast, in
337 LMICs and tropical countries, AKI occurs frequently outside the hospital setting following episodes of
338 diarrhoea, infections and obstetric complications [102]. Nephrotoxins can also cause AKI-related
339 nephron loss inside and outside hospitals; for example, neonates treated with aminoglycosides,
340 cancer patients receiving chemotherapy or communities exposed to environmental toxins such as
341 heavy metals or aristolochic acid can experience AKI episodes [30].

342342

343 [H3]Ageing.

344 The slope of GFR decline varies among individuals depending upon age (FIG. 3), genetic factors, blood
345 pressure, diseases implying kidney injury and body weight. Histologically, kidney ageing presents as
346 global glomerulosclerosis, the respective atrophy of entire nephrons, and subsequent interstitial
347 fibrosis [53, 85]. Whether ageing-related nephron loss is associated with hypertrophy (and glomerular
348 hyperfiltration) of remnant nephrons is not consistently reported in the literature [53, 85], but the
349 analytical difficulties on how to precisely assess nephron number, glomerular volume, and how to
350 acknowledge the different functions of juxtamedullary versus cortical nephrons can affect the
351 interpretation of such data [53, 85]. Ageing is associated with decreasing podocyte density and total
352 numbers [53]. Endomitosis-related mitotic catastrophe and podocyte detachment may contribute to
353 glomerulosclerosis[53, 103,104].

354354

355 [H2]Systemic effects

356 The kidney is involved in multiple complex hormonal processes important in anemia, bone
357 integrity, in regulation of acid base and electrolyte homeostasis, as well as blood pressure control

through neuroendocrine and volume sensors. As nephron mass declines, patients will suffer from complications associated with dysregulation of many of these systems. Anemia, vitamin D deficiency, hyperparathyroidism, acidosis, hyperkalemia and hyperphosphatemia, hyperuricemia, as well as hypertension and expansion of effective circulating fluid volume are all clinical manifestations of these derangements. Interestingly, they do not occur in all individuals at the same point in the progressive loss of kidney function, and there are some maintain excellent tubular/ excretory function despite derangements in hormonal function (i.e. severe anemia, and normal electrolytes).

Not all of the derangements are symptomatic, and the severity of the symptoms is variable between individuals. They include: disorders of fluid and electrolytes, mineral and bone disorder, anemia, hypertension, dyslipidemia, endocrine abnormalities, in children growth impairment, decreased clearance of renally excreted substances from the body (eg, hyperuricemia), metabolic acidosis. Related symptoms may be fatigue, anorexia, weight loss, pruritis, nausea, vomiting, muscle cramping, edema, shortness of breath, to name a few. None are specific for CKD.

[H3] Fluid and electrolyte abnormalities.

Sodium and water balance — Sodium and intravascular volume balance are usually maintained via homeostatic mechanisms until the GFR falls below 10 to 15 mL/min per 1.73 m^2. However, the patient with mild to moderate CKD, despite being in relative volume balance, is less able to respond to rapid infusions of sodium and is, therefore, prone to fluid overload. In some cases, especially with an acute water load, hyponatremia and hypertension may occur as a consequence of fluid retention. Some patients, such as those with nephronophthisis and some with obstructive uropathy, have an impaired ability to concentrate urine, and have symptoms of polyuria. These children are at risk for hypovolemia, as they will continue to have large urine losses even when they are volume depleted.

Hyperkalemia — In children with CKD, hyperkalemia develops due to reduced GFR causing inadequate potassium excretion. Also, potassium excretion is dependent upon an exchange with sodium at the distal tubule. A low GFR decreases delivery of sodium to this site where there is

384 reduction in the exchange rate with potassium into the urinary lumen. Other contributory factors for
385 hyperkalemia include: high dietary potassium intake, catabolic conditions with increased tissue
386 breakdown, metabolic acidosis, secondary type IV renal tubular acidosis (RTA) in some patients with
387 obstructive uropathy, decreased renin production by the juxtaglomerular apparatus, primary or
388 secondary hypoaldosteronism related to RAS inhibitor-related impaired cellular uptake of potassium
389
390 **[H3]Metabolic acidosis**.
391 Metabolic acidosis is observed in patients with advanced CKD and is related to the fall in total
392 ammonium excretion that occurs when the GFR decreases to below 40 to 50 mL/min per 1.73
393 m^2 (GFR category G3). In addition, there is a reduction in both titratable acid excretion (primarily as
394 phosphate) and bicarbonate reabsorption. As the patient approaches ESKD, the serum bicarbonate
395 concentration tends to stabilize between 12 and 20 mEq/L. A level <10 mEq/L is unusual, as buffering
396 of the retained hydrogen ions by various body buffers prevents a progressive fall in the bicarbonate
397397 concentration. In children with CKD, metabolic acidosis has a negative impact on growth.
398398

399 [H3] Anemia.
400 The anemia of CKD is due primarily to reduced renal erythropoietin production. The anemia of CKD is
401 principally normocytic and normochromic. By comparison, the finding of microcytosis may reflect
402 iron deficiency or aluminum excess, while macrocytosis may be associated with vitamin B12 or folate
403 deficiency. If left untreated, the anemia of CKD is associated with fatigue, weakness, decreased
404404 attentiveness, increased somnolence, and poor exercise tolerance.
405405

406 [H3]Mineral bone disease.
407 Chronic kidney disease-mineral and bone disorder (CKD-MBD) presents as a broad clinical spectrum
408 encompassing abnormalities in mineral metabolism, bone structure, and extraskeletal calcifications

409 that are found with progressive CKD. Patients with mild CKD (G2 KDIGO) may have reduced serum

410 calcidiol and/or calcitriol levels, and an elevated serum parathyroid hormone (PTH) and fibroblast
411 growth factor 23 (FGF-23) level [105]. Patients with more advanced CKD-MBD have bone pain, difficulty
412 in walking, and/or skeletal deformities and a higher risk of fracture [106].
413413

414 [H3]Hypertension.

415 Hypertension can be present in the earliest stages of CKD, and its prevalence increases with
416 progressive declines in GFR. Hypertension is high in children with CKD, ranging from 54 to 70 percent
417 of patients [107]. Hypertension is due to activation of the RAS and volume expansion. In some cases,
418 hypertension arises from corticosteroids or calcineurin inhibitors such as cyclosporine or tacrolimus
419419 used to treat the underlying kidney disease.
420420

421 [H3]Dyslipidemia.

422 Abnormal lipid metabolism is common in patients with CKD and is one of the primary factors that
423423 increase the risk for CVD.
424424

425 [H3]Hyperuricemia.

426 Elevated uric acid levels may develop in patients with CKD due to decreased urinary excretion. Serum
427 uric acid greater than 7.5 mg/dL is an independent risk factor for accelerated progression of CKD and
428428 should be treated to have a better outcome.
429429

430 [H3]Cardiovascular disease.

431 CVD is the leading cause of death in patients with CKD worldwide [14]. The increased incidence of CVD
432 is due to the high prevalence of CVD risk factors, such as hypertension, dyslipidemia, hyperuricemia,
433 abnormal glucose metabolism obesity. Young adults (25 to 34 years) with CKD have at least a 100-
434 fold higher risk for CVD-related mortality compared with the general population [108]. Patients with a

435 glomerular etiology of CKD and proteinuria were more likely to have CVD risk factors. The CKD-

436 related cardiovascular alterations resemble all aspects of an accelerated ageing process associated
437 with a shortening of relative telomere length [109]. The vasculature can be affected by both,
438 atherosclerosis and arteriosclerosis, with lipid-rich plaques but also abundant media calcification. The
439 burden of atherosclerotic CVD increases in the early stages of CKD, and the burden of non-
440 atherosclerotic CVD increases in the more advanced stages of CKD. The „two“ diseases involve
441 different factors that cause distinct changes in the risk factor profile and contribute differently to
442 outcomes during the course of CKD. Adaptive changes of the heart include left ventricular
443 hypertrophy (LVH) but also dilatation with subsequent both, systolic and diastolic dysfunction. There
444 are two different patterns of LVH: concentric LVH, which occurs in the presence of hypertension, and
445 eccentric LVH, which is associated with volume overload and anemia. Early and sustained induction
446 of fibroblast growth factor-23 was recently discovered as a driver of LVH in CKD [110].

447 The absolute risk of cardiovascular events in individuals with pre-dialysis CKD is similar to
448 that of patients with established coronary artery disease in the general population [111], and the
449 increase in risk multifactorial: a higher prevalence of insulin resistance [112], high blood pressure,
450 vascular calcification [113, 114], inflammation and protein-energy wasting [115]. ESKD is associated with a
451 range of metabolic abnormalities, the so-called milieu of uremic toxicity [116], activation of the neuro-
452 hormonal axis [117], vitamin D receptors [113], that may all contribute to accelerated ageing of the
453 vasculature and damage to the heart. Hemodialysis itself may have a direct negative effect on the
454 heart, so-called myocardial stunning [118]. As a consequence the cardiac and vascular mortality are
455 several times higher in patients with low GFR or on dialysis than in the general population. Thus, the
456 risk of CVD in patients who require dialysis depends largely on their cardiovascular health at dialysis
457 initiation. In patients with healthy arteries, the pre-dialysis management strategy should be
458 continued to prevent new cardiovascular lesions. Consequently, risk factors for CVD should be
459459 managed intensively in the pre-dialysis period, during transition, and at dialysis initiation.
460460

461 [H3]Endocrine dysfunction.

462 In patients with CKD, the following endocrine systems become dysfunctional as kidney function
463 progressively deteriorates. Each of these is discussed in greater detail separately. There are
464 abnormalities in gonadal hormones in both male and female patients, which can results in reduced
465 fertility and sexual problems. In children, these abnornalities result in delayed puberty in two-thirds
466 of adolescents with ESKD [119]. End-organ resistance to GH due to increased levels of insulin growth
467 factor binding proteins appears to play a major role in growth impairment in children with CKD [120].
468 Abnormalities in thyroid function can also be observed.

469 [H3]Neurological signs.

470 Uremia is associated with cognitive alterations ijn adults and lower performance in all neurocognitive
471 domains development in children. The neurologic findings can range from seizures and severe
472 intellectual disability to subtle deficits.

473 [H3]Sleep and fatigue.

474 Daytime sleepiness and fatigue are common and increase with decreasing kidney function. Sleep
475 disorders (restless leg syndrome/paroxysmal leg movements, sleep-disordered breathing, excessive
476 daytime sleepiness, and insomnia) are also common

477 [H3]Uremia.

478 The onset of ESKD (ie, GFR category G5) results in a constellation of signs and symptoms
479 referred to as uremia. Manifestations of the uremic state include anorexia, nausea, vomiting, growth
480 retardation, peripheral neuropathy, and central nervous system abnormalities ranging from loss of
481 concentration and lethargy to seizures, coma, and death. Patients who are uremic also have an
482 increased tendency to bleed secondary to abnormal platelet adhesion and aggregation properties.
483 Pericardial disease (pericarditis and pericardial effusion) is an indication to institute dialysis. The
484484 initiation of RRT should be considered
485485

[H1] Diagnosis, screening and prevention

The clinical presentation of CKD depends upon the underlying disorder and the severity of renal impairment. Patients with early stages of CKD G1-2 are usually asymptomatic. From CKD G3-5 patients may experience weakness related to anemia and polyuria. Only in late stages and in untreated patients symptoms may include anorexia, vomiting, weakness, and fatigue, which are referred to as symptoms of uremia.

[H2]Detection and diagnosis

CKD can be detected during a periodic health assessment in an asymptomatic person or during evaluation of individuals at risk for CKD (Box 1); as a consequence of the incidental finding of abnormal laboratory values in connection with an acute or chronic illness; during an investigation of symptoms and/or signs relating to the kidneys or urinary tract (such as haematuria); or during discovery of abnormal laboratory values in a population-based screening program. Importantly, the two biochemical parameters (GFR and proteinuria) used in the aforementioned KDIGO matrix[1] define and classify a "generic" form of CKD, and adding an etiological diagnosis is both highly desirable and recommended by KDIGO (The **C**ause/**G**FR/**A**lbuminuria [CGA] classifications system), whenever possible, such that the underlying conditions can be treated first to halt progression of CKD. Progression is defined according to changes in eGFR by KDIGO[1]. Several tests can be performed to confirm a CKD diagnosis and identify its cause. It must be stressed that a diagnosis of CKD, according to the KDIGO construct, requires persistence or progression of the defining abnormality for at least 3 months. A single value of GFR or albuminuria is insufficient and if used for diagnosis of CKD will lead

[H3] Measuring and estimating GFR.

First, the assessment begins with measurement of serum creatinine concentration (under steady-state conditions) and applying formulas for estimated GFR (eGFR – creatinine, like CKD-EPI eGFR-

512 creatinine). It must be recognized that the results of these creatinine based tests can be influenced
513 by changes in muscle bulk (atrophy or hypertrophy), dietary intake of cooked red meat (strict vegan
514 diet) and alterations in tubular secretion of creatinine from exposure to drugs (e.g. trimethoprim-
515 sulfamethoxazole) [121, 122]. Alternative approaches using serum cystatin_C concentrations have also
516 been proposed. While not influenced by muscled bulk and diet, the cystatin C -based formulas for
517 eGFR can be affected by inflammation, obesity, thyroid disease, diabetes, and steroid administration
518 [123]. Second, some eGFR formulashave not been extensively validated in older subjects and may not
519 apply to Asians or Africans [124, 125]. Third, the requirements for inclusion of demographic variables of
520 age and gender, to correct for differences in creatinine generation, may also create unwanted
521 complications in determining prognostic implications of a calculated GFR . Newer eGFR formulas such
522 as FAS (full age spectrum) or CKD-EPI using serum creatinine, cystatin C or a combination or Cystatin
523 C or a combination of both have improved accuracy to predict mGFR [126, 127]. Although cumbersome
524 and expensive, mGFR assessments using urinary clearance methodology can sometimes be needed,
525 but applying methods of plasma clearance of Iohexol or of radiolabelled Iothalamate could avoid
526 some of these issues. In well-defined circumstances, such as stratifying long term risks of uni-
527 nephrectomy for potential living kidney donors, such studies can be useful [128, 129]. As mentioned in
528 the introduction, caution should be exercised in using a fixed and arbitrary threshold of
529 <60ml/min/1.73m2 of GFR alone (in the absence of abnormal proteinuria or imaging) for the
530 diagnosis of CKD in older or elderly adults. A GFR of 45-59ml/min/1.73m2 is fairly common in
531 otherwise healthy seniors, depending on their age, due to the normal physiologic loss of nephrons
532 and GFR with organ senescence [130].

533533

534 **[H3]Measuring proteinuria.**

535 Abnormal rates of urinary excretion of albumin or total protein are essential for detection of
536 CKD when GFR is normal and contribute to the assessment of prognosis [131]. Proteinuria (or
537 albuminuria) can be determined in multiple ways, including simple “dip stick” qualitative methods,

538 point-of-care urinary albumin concentration tests, random un-timed urine samples for calculation of
539 urine protein (or albumin) to creatinine ratios (UPCR or UACR in mg/mg or mg/mmol), or timed 24
540 hour urine collections and measuring absolute protein or albumin excretion [132, 133]. Each of these has
541 advantages and pitfalls. But it is important to recognise that not all patients with CKD have abnormal
542 urinary protein excretion. For example, early in the course of Autosomal Dominant Polycystic Kidney
543 Disease the urinary protein exertion is normal only slightly increased [134].

544 Urinary protein or albumin excretion is more variable than serum creatinine levels, and can
545 be influenced by posture, activity, fever or drugs so multiple specimens must be collected to enhance
546 reliability. UPCR and UACR methods can be influenced by the prevailing urinary creatinine excretion
547 rate; i.e. low creatinine excretion (from sarcopenia) can increase UPCR or UACR values even at
548 normal absolute protein or albumin excretion rates. Hence, adjusting for the effect of urinary
549 creatinine excretion can enhance the accuracy of UPCR and UACR measurements [132, 133].

550 In the KDIGO schema, UACR values are divided into three categories [1], namely, normal or
551 low, which is <30 mg/g creatinine (<3.0 mg/mmol, formerly "normo-albuminuria"); moderately
552 increased, which is ≥30-299 mg/g creatinine (>3.0-29 mg/mmol, formerly "micro-albuminuria"); and
553 severely increased, which is ≥300 mg/g creatinine (30 mg/mmol, formerly "macro-albuminuria").
554 Even with a normal eGFR, CKD can be diagnosed with persistent UACR of >30 mg/g creatinine. Each
555 incremental increase in UACR is associated with an increased risk of mortality and ESKD, so sustained
556 albuminuria (or proteinuria) is a powerful prognostic marker.

557 The corresponding "dipstick" (urinalysis test strip) values (and protein concentration in
558 mg/dL) are negative (<10 mg/dL) to trace (10-15 mg/dL) for normal, 1+ (30 mg/dL) for moderate and
559 2+ (>100 mg/dL) or greater for severe proteinuria. Persistent proteinuria of >1+ is a good predictor of
560 a tendency for CKD progression, i.e. GFR decline of > 5 ml/min/1.73 m^2/year or 7 times the normal
561 rate of loss with ageing [135]. Thus, albuminuria or proteinuria allow early detection of CKD (see
562 Screening below), but several forms of progressive CKD can present with normal or only slightly
563 increased albumin or protein excretion, especially tubulo-interstitial diseases such as autosomal

564 dominant polycystic kidney disease [134]. Marked proteinuria (in excess of 3.5 g/d in and adult),
565 especially when accompanied by a reduction in serum albumin concentration (referred to as
566 "nephrotic syndrome") nearly always implies a diagnosis of a primary or secondary glomerulopathy
567 underlying CKD [136].

568568

569 [H3]Biopsy and pathology.

570 Percutaneous kidney biopsy is a very valuable tool in assessement of the underlying cause for CKD.
571 The indications for performance of a renal biopsy in a patient with CKD depends upon the benefits to
572 be obtained (precise diagnosis, better prognosis, appropriate therapy) and the risks of a biopsy-
573 related complications. Kidney biopsies are commonly recommended for adult patients with
574 nephrotic syndrome (urine protein excretion of >3.5 g/d and serum albumin levels <3.5 g/dL) but
575 may also be indicated for evaluation of unexplained rapidly progressive loss of kidney function,
576 persistent hematuria and low-grade- proteinuria (0.5-3 g/d), of even isolated proteinuria (1-3 g/d) [137].
577 Depending on the circumstances leading to the procedure, the pathologic findings can vary widely,
578 but in states of marked proteinuria glomerular diseases are most likely be seen. The degree of
579 tubule-interstitial scarring can provide useful prognostic information. The risks of renal biopsy are
580 minimal in experienced hands, and complications are mostly related to post-biopsy bleeding. Fatal
581 complications are rare (about 1;20,000). Major complications, such as nephrectomy or transfusion
582 requiring bleeding are more common (about 1:250-500) [138, 139].

583583

584 [H3]Other tests.

585 Continuing advances in the field of serum and urine proteomics, microRNA biology and in serology
586 are providing many new powerful and non-invasive tools to identify specific diseases or groups of
587 diseases that may revolutionize the approach to detecting and diagnosing CKD in the future [140].
588 These new tools may also expand the horizon of prognosis into new areas beyond GFR and
589 proteinuria estimation — giving rise to exciting new possibilities for "precision" medicine whereby

care of CKD is personalized based diagnostic and prognostic characteristics. Unfortunately, many patients with CKD are only recognized in the later stage of the disease (Categories G3B-G5) where CKD complications such anemia, metabolic acidosis, mineral-bone disease provide additional diagnostic clues.

In addition, both detection and diagnosis of CKD, also rely on renal imaging (ultrasonography, CT and MRI), careful examination of the urinary sediment, and specialized biochemical and serologic tests suitable to detect specific disorders causing CKD (Box 2). Imaging tests are particularly valuable as they provide information on kidney size, contours, location, and density as well as anatomy of the urinary drainage system (pelvis, ureters and bladder). Specific lesions, such as cysts, dilation of ureters or pelvis, calcification, masses, scars an provide valuable clues to the cause of CKD or even generate a specific diagnosis (such as autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease or obstructive uropathy) [141]. Then urine sediment examination is important for the detection and quantification of haematuria, leukocyturia and casts.

Genetic testing is also emerging as an important tool for diagnosing CKD, particularly in children or young adults. Autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease, podocytopathies causing steroid-resistant nephrotic syndrome, Fabry's disease, Alport syndrome, are other well-known entities requiring a genetic diagnosis. Using next-generation sequencing displays an unexpected genetic heterogeneity and alterations in numerous different genes in a significant proportion of not only familial or syndromic patients but also in sporadic cases of CKD. These observations imply the need for updating the current management in terms of diagnostic algorithms and therapeutic choices [77, 142].

[H2]Screening

In the context of CKD, screening can take two forms: population screening, for example, using "dipstick" urinary testing of school children or soldiers; or "opportunistic screening", whereby

616 physician encounters for other medical reasons can be used to screen for CKD. Population-based
617 screening can be further divided into general population screening or "targeted" screening of high-
618 risk population groups (such as diabetic or family members related to subjects with diagnosed CKD).
619 Unfortunately, the benefits and harms of both forms of screening for CKD have not been rigorously
620 tested in long-term prospective studies, so the overall benefits and harms of population-based
621 screening for CKD are poorly understood and further trials are needed [143, 144]. Population-based
622 screening for CKD is not recommended by the United States Preventive Task Force largely due to
623 insufficient evidence of benefit (or harm) [145]. Evidence in favor of case-finding (i.e., testing for CKD in
624 people with recognized risk factors, such as hypertension or diabetes) is slightly better, but still
625 incomplete. Accordingly, the American College of Physicians determined that current evidence was
626 insufficient to evaluate the benefits (or harms) of screening and case-finding for CKD [146]. The position
627 on screening for CKD varies widely around the world, with several countries having long-established
628 programs (Japan and Singapore for example) and others that have introduced them as part of
629 universal health care systems systems (The United Kingdom for example) [147-151].

630 Both screening and case-finding for CKD are logistically hampered by the need for re-
631 evaluation at a defined interval to fulfil the duration requirement for diagnosis. Therefore, one-off
632 testing using eGFR or proteinuria has a high "false positive" detection/diagnosis rate, and possible
633 misclassification of subjects by use of a fixed (non-age-sensitive) eGFR thresholds, as discussed. The
634 potential harms of general population screening involve excessive follow-up diagnostic procedures,
635 unnecessary referral of subjects erroneously diagnosed as having CKD, the anxiety induced by being
636 labelled as having CKD, and potential impact on insurability. Nevertheless, several national kidney
637 organizations advocate screening for CKD. Monte Carlo simulations support case-finding strategies in
638 diabetic subjects for albuminuria or hypertension [152], because early treatment may offer significant
639 effects on delaying CKD progression and ESKD [153]. Some studies have suggested that testing for
640 abnormal albuminuria may be an efficient way of stratifying populations for more intensive search
641 for modifiable risk factors for CKD and cardio-vascular events, such as hypertension and diabetes [154].

642 Indeed, abnormal proteinuria (even only slightly above the upper limit of normal) identifies people at
643 greater risk for ESKD and/or cardiovascular morbidity and mortality [155]. As mentioned before,
644 population screening for CKD using eGFR tends to substantially over-diagnose CKD in older subjects
645 with no or minimal proteinuria. Opportunistic testing for CKD has much merit, especially if the
646 subjects have other risk factors such as diabetes, hypertension, or a family history of CKD. In such
647 patients an eGFR should be assessed along with an estimate of albuminuria or total protein excretion
648 ("dipstick"), UACR or UPCR- adjusted for creatinine excretion rate). It also must be appreciated that
649 older subjects with CKD G3 (as defined by KDIGO, see above) detected in screening programs or
650 otherwise in primary care practices tend to have a rather benign prognosis, at least over the short
651 term of 5 years or less. Shardlow et al found a very low rate of ESKD (0.2%) and stable or remission
652 of CKD was found in 53% of such subjects (average age 73 years at entry) after 5 years of follow-up
653653 [156].

654 Finally, there are a few special circumstances where testing of apparently healthy individuals
655 for CKD may be indicated. For example, first degree relatives of a patient with autosomal-dominant
656 polycystic kidney disease (ADPKD) are eligible for screening with renal ultrasound or MRI regardless
657 of results of eGFR or proteinuria. Siblings of patients with Fabry's disease, Alport syndrome, or thin
658 basement membrane nephropathy might also benefit from genetic analysis as well. African-
659 Americans with hypertension or HIV infection may receive more informed prognosis by assessment
660 of *APOL1* risk alleles, but population-based screening for *APOL1* risk alleles is not yet justifiable [157]
661661

662 [H2]Prevention

663 From a societal perspective, prevention of CKD is preferable to after- the-fact treatment of kidney
664 disease at its end-stage by dialysis or transplantation. Both primary prevention (occurring before CKD
665 is established) and secondary prevention (initiated to slow the rate of CKD progression or to affect
666 the associated co-morbidities or complications; see below, Management) should be considered.

667 Primary prevention attacks the root causes of CKD and includes mitigating exposures to

668 nephrotoxic agents and events (Box 1). Reduction of the burden of infectious diseases (such as HIV,
669 Malaria, *Streptococcus* infection) have already yielded some protection from CKD, but many
670 challenges remain. Preventing obesity and the associated type 2 diabetes mellitus is a global
671 challenge [158]. The discovery of a central role for sugar and fructose intake and metabolism in obesity
672 can be cited as an example of progress with implications for primary prevention. Indeed, better
673 glycemic control may also eventually prevent CKD and its progression [153, 159-161]. Improved recognition
674 and reduction of the prevalence of AKI may also have dividends on prevention of CKD, especially in
675 counties where AKI is common, under-recognized and under-treated such as equatorial Africa. Given
676 the importance of low nephron endowment, fetal malnutrition and/or dysmaturity and manifested
677 by low birth weight, global efforts to reduce fetal malnutrition and dysmaturity should have
678 enormous "pay-back" in later years and focussed effects are beginning to address this important
679 topic [66].

680680

681 [H1] Management

682 Several aspects need to be considered when managing patients with CKD: controlling nephron injury,
683 normalizing single nephron hyperfiltration, controlling CKD-related complications, and preparing the
684 patient for kidney replacement therapy. At the core of these is the principle of 'the earlier-the
685 better', which is the effort to reduce the progression to ESKD and optimize renal outcomes.

686 The impact of early therapy is well documented for Alport syndrome [162]. Initiating RAS
687 blockade based on the genetic diagnosis before any signs of kidney disease can have dramatic effects
688 on renal outcomes, whereas initiating RAS blockade as late as CKD G3 only somewhat delayed ESKD
689 (FIG. 6) [162]. Further support comes from a posthoc analysis of clinical trials testing RAS blockade in
690 diabetic kidney disease. The effect on gaining ESKD-free years was highest when RAS blockade was
691 initiated at the time of microalbuminuria and lowest when initiated once a diagnosis of CKD G3 or G4
692 was made [163]. Therefore, early diagnosis and treatment are essential to prevent nephron loss from as
693 early as possible.

694694

695 [H2]Controlling ongoing nephron injury

696 Nephron injury can be driven numerous triggers (Table 1), and abrogating these triggers will slow
697 progression to CKD and ESKD. For example, genetic abnormalities can cause CKD either by fostering
698 nephrocalcinosis [164], cystic degeneration or by weakening epithelial integrity such as in genetic
699 podocytopathies or in abnormal processing or storage of metabolites or glycoproteins [78, 165]. Specific
700 cures for genetic kidney diseases exist in some forms and are mostly limited to enzyme replacement
701 therapy or substrate supplementation (Table 1). The genetic basis of immune-mediated nephron
702 injury is not yet fully explored but C3 glomerulonephritis or atypical hemolytic uremic syndrome
703 (aHUS) can be controlled with complement inhibitors, an area of intense and promising research [166].
704 Most acute forms of immune-mediated nephron injury present either as vasculitis, immune complex
705 glomerulonephritis or interstitial nephritis (including allograft rejection). These disorders can often
706 be targeted with immunomodulatory drugs (and sometimes with plasma exchange) to limit nephron
707 loss from attack by the humoral and/or cellular elements of the immune system [167].

708 In contrast, in smoldering immune injury, such as in chronic IgA nephropathy, it is difficult to
709 dissect CKD progression driven by immune versus non-immune mechanisms and the efficacy of
710 immunosuppression versus RAS blockade and blood pressure control is less evident [168]. Kidney biopsy
711 may establish the diagnosis and can also guide management by assessing the ongoing activity of
712 immune injury versus irreversible damage, e.g. in lupus nephritis, IgA nephropathy or allograft
713 dysfunction. Specific treatments are also available for CKD related to urinary tract obstruction,
714 infections, and some forms of toxic injury (Table 1). However, even upon complete abrogation of the
715715 injurious trigger, recovery of lost nephrons is impossible.

716716

717 [H3]Preventing any avoidable injury of remnant nephrons.

718 Avoiding further episodes of AKI is crucial to minimize stress on the remnant nephrons in CKD
719 kidneys. This implies patient education on avoidable nephrotoxins such as radio contrast media,

720 NSAIDs, certain antibiotics or other endemic or occupational toxins. Hypovolemic states as well as
721 urinary outflow obstruction should be avoided. Additionally, not every asymptomatic leukocyturia
722 implies bacterial infection and antibiotic treatment should be limited to the presence of dysuria,
723 bacteriuria, and leukocyturia. Smoking cessation is essential minimize CVD [169].
724

725 [H2] Normalizing single nephron hyperfiltration

726 Rigorous RAS inhibition with ACE inhibitors (ACEi) or angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs) has the
727 capacity to substantially reduce SNGFR and glomerular filtration pressure, which leads to a decline in
728 not only proteinuria but also total GFR — and, hence, moderately increases serum creatinine levels
729 [170]. At first, this serum creatinine increase is worrisome to patients (and physicians) and requires
730 clarification that reducing hyperfiltration in remnant nephrons is the central strategy to retard CKD
731 progression in patients with proteinuria. In contrast, ACEi or ARBs do not retard the progression of
732 non-proteinuric forms of CKD such as ADPKD but still may have benefits on the associated
733 cardiovascular complications [171]. ACEi or ARBs should be titrated to the maximal possible dose, while
734 hyperkalemia can be corrected using loop diuretics or potassium-binding resins [172]. A moderate
735 increase in serum creatinine levels indicates a decline in SNGFR, which is a powerful predictor of the
736 intended nephroprotective effect [173]. Numerous RCTs have documented the class effect of RAS
737 inhibitors to retard or even halt CKD progression [44]. Reducing dietary salt and drugs that support
738 control of blood pressure and hyperlipidemia, often referred to as "remission clinic protocol", may
739 further reduce proteinuria and retard CKD progression [174, 175]. Such interventions are affordable and
740 are of importance where kidney replacement therapy is not available or affordable.

741 Avoiding or correcting obesity can also reduce filtration load and glomerular hypertension;
742 hence, a normal BMI is a treatment target to retard CKD progression [176]. Any immunosuppression-
743 related benefit of using steroids in CKD may be counterbalanced by steroid-related obesity that
744 drives glomerular hyperfiltration and secondary FSGS, which could explain why steroid treatment
745 falls short in retarding progression of IgA nephropathy-related CKD [168]. Finally, concomitant diabetes

746 has important implications for CKD management [177]. Hyperglycemia maximizes glomerular
747 hyperfiltration via SGLT2-driven vasodilation of the afferent arteriole of the remnant nephrons,
748 which cannot be controlled by RAS inhibitors [94]. Recently, SGLT2 inhibitors have been shown to
749 reverse this process and elicit profound additive nephroprotective effects on CKD progression [98, 178].
750 Their capacity to also reduce CVD (in patients with type 2 diabetes) [178, 179] provides a strong rationale
751751 for dual RAS/SGLT2 blockade in patients with diabetes and CKD.
752752

753 **[H2]Controlling CKD complications**

754 CKD is associated with a number of secondary complications that require management (Box 3), the
755 most relevant of which in terms of overall mortality is CVD [14]. Cardiac and vascular alterations also
756 arise from endocrine failure (e.g. lack of erythropoietin, vitamin D, parathyroid hormone), which
757 causes anemia and secondary hyperparathyroidism [180]. Myocardial fibrosis is the final consequence
758 of the multiple underlying causes.

759 Large randomized controlled trials in patients on hemodialysis have tested a number of
760 different interventions intended to reduce cardiovascular events such as dialysis dose and flux,
761 erythropoietin-stimulating agents, statins, RAS blockade, folic acid, cinacalcet or vitamin D
762 derivatives but have largely been unsuccessful [181-183]. For example, statins may prevent
763 cardiovascular events in patients on dialysis, but the magnitude of any relative reduction in risk is
764 substantially smaller as compared to what can be achieved in CKD 2-4 [183-186]. For example, reduction
765 of LDL cholesterol with simvastatin plus ezetimibe reduced the incidence of major atherosclerotic
766 events more efficiently in patients with CKD G2-4 than with CKD G5 or 5D [183]. Hence, early
767 intervention with standard-of-care is essential in patients with CKD 2-4. In parallel, similar concepts
768 for cardiovascular protection are administered for progression of diabetic and non-diabetic kidney
769 disease. For these patients, guideline-directed approaches to achieve target blood pressure through
770 administration of RAS blockers, salt restriction and anemia prevention is the mainstay of therapy [187,

771 [188]. Guidance is also available for the correction of acidosis and mineral and bone metabolism

772 disorders (Box 3) [189].

773773

774 **[H2]Preparing for kidney replacement therapy**

775 ESKD typically requires renal replacement therapy, although conservative treatment is a potential

776 alternative option, especially in older adults with limited life span. Counseling on the options (kidney

777 transplant, hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis or no dialysis) should be coordinated by the nephrologist

778 and involve a multidisciplinary team including the general practitioner. Early counseling is essential

779 because informed patients are better prepared to face kidney failure. Indeed, late referral, i.e. at the

780 time of ESKD, is associated with worse health status at the time of kidney replacement therapy

781 initiation, higher mortality after starting dialysis, and decreased access to transplant [190]. However,

782 one of the biggest challenges nephrologists face is to predict kidney disease progression, which does

783 not follow a steady linear decline. This unpredictability often becomes a barrier to timely shared

784 decision making between patients and physicians and could lead to adverse patient outcomes [190],

785 and may offset the relationship between the early pre-dialysis nephrology care for adults with late

786 stage of CKD and improved outcomes [191]. KDIGO suggested that dialysis be initiated when one or

787 more of the following are present: symptoms or signs attributable to kidney failure (serositis, acid-

788 base or electrolyte abnormalities, pruritus); inability to control volume status or blood pressure; a

789 progressive deterioration in nutritional status refractory to dietary intervention; or cognitive-

790 impairment [1]. This often but not invariably occurs in the GFR range between 5 and 10

791 ml/min/1.73m^2. Moreover, living donor preemptive renal transplantation in adults should be

792 considered when the GFR is <20 ml/min/1.73m^2, and there is evidence of progressive and irreversible

793 CKD over the preceding 6-12 months [1].

794794

795 **[H3]Hemodialysis.**

796 In 1945 Willem Kolff was the first to successfully treat kidney failure of a patient by performing

797 hemodialys using an artificial kidney able to clear blood from uremic toxins [192]. Since then numerous
798 technical innovations have optimized the procedure that meanwhile has become available (but not
799 everywhere affordable) all over the world [38]. Preparing patients for hemodialysis involves referral for
800 vascular access placement. The types of access include arteriovenous fistulae, arteriovenous grafts
801 and central venous catheters (which are for short-term use) (FIG. 7A-C); arteriovenous access is the
802 preferred option for hemodialysis, although there is no consensus about the optimal timing for
803 creation, especially for arteriovenous fistulae [193]. To protect the blood vessels for permanent vascular
804 access, attention should be taken to avoid venous puncture or intravenous catheter placement
805 proximal to the wrist, which implies that venous puncture at the back of the hand still being possible.
806 Arteriovenous access (either fistulae or grafts) is associated with better outcomes than central
807 venous catheters [194] [195]. Patients with a central venous catheter have poorer survival than those who
808 subsequently convert to functional arteriovenous access [196]. Thus, a functional arteriovenous access
809809 is preferable for all patients in which the vascular status allows to install a fistula.
810810

811 **[H3]Peritoneal dialysis.**

812 Peritoneal dialysis is another way to eliminate uremic toxins from the blood using the
813 peritoneal membrane as an exchange interface. For this a transcutaneous catheter is implanted into
814 the peritoneal cavity that allows repetitive daily drainage and refills of dialysate fluid. After some
815 hours of reaching equilibrium between uremic blood and fresh dialysate each dwell is expected to
816 drain excess fluid, metabolic waste products including uremic toxins (FIG. 7D). There are published
817 guidelines regarding insertion and perioperative management of peritoneal dialysis catheters. A
818 peritoneal dialysis catheter may be ready for use after 2 to 3 weeks. However, there is marked
819 variability in peritoneal dialysis catheter insertion techniques (open surgery, blind via trocar or blind
820 via Seldinger technique) and perioperative management [197]. Interestingly, patients starting on
821 peritoneal dialysis show better initial outcome and preservation of residual renal function, especially
822 in the first 2 years as compared to patients on hemodialysis [198].

823823

824 **[H3]Kidney transplantation.**

825 When available, suitability for kidney transplantation should be evaluated according to age and co-
826 morbidities, but it may take months to complete [199]. Co-morbidities such as cancer, chronic
827 infections, cardiac or peripheral vascular disease, and the risk for medical noncomplicance are
828 carefully evaluated in this process. Depending on the regional ratio of donors to recipients and on
829 allocation rules, waiting time for a deceased donor kidney can vary from a few months (e.g. Belgium,
830 Austria) to many years (e.g. Germany). Thus, the option of living kidney donation should be explored.

831 To test for eligibility, potential donors must undergo a comprehensive health assessment
832 including tests for blood group and human leukocyte antigen compatibility with the potential
833 recipient, GFR measures, imaging of the kidneys and the urinary tract, cardiac testing, and other tests
834 depending on the medical history. This is because, the donor's short and long-term well-being after
835 donation remains a first priorityPre-emptive transplantation (kidney transplantation before even
836 initiating dialysis) may offer several benefits to ESKD patients but its impacts remain under
837 evaluation [200]. The half-life of a transplanted kidney is <20 years, making these patients also potential
838 candidates for CKD treatments during their life span [201]. For example, recurrent glomerulonephritis is
839 an unpredictable complication that can have a negative impact on graft outcome [202].

840

841 **[H2]Conservative treatment/palliative care**

842 Kidney replacement therapy may not be available or affordable but it may also not be advisable for
843 medical reasons. Especially in very old ESKD patients, dialysis may neither increase life span nor
844 improve quality of life (QOL) [203-205]: in such cases palliative (trying to control the symptoms of uremia
845 affecting QOL [206]) and education starting at CKD G4 (aimed at explaining comorbidity management)
846 may be appropriate. Withdrawal from dialysis is a related issue and is common in very old
847 hemodialysis patients [207].

848848

849 **[H1] Quality of life**

850 CKD-related symptoms increase along CKD progresses and are key drivers of poor QOL in patients
851 with CKD and ESRKD [208-210]. In contrast, symptoms rapidly improve upon kidney transplantation.
852 Symptoms are most severe in dialysis patients, who frequently report fatigue, nausea, dyspnea,
853 anorexia, pruritus, restless legs, and cramps [211]. Pain is especially common: in a survey of 205
854 prevalent patients on hemodialysis, approximately 25% had "severe" pain during the 24h preceding
855 the interview, and an additional 12% had "moderate pain" [212]. Mental illness including depression
856 and anxiety are also common [213], but are understudied among people with CKD. Unfortunately,
857 clinical and epidemiological characteristics associated with the presence, severity, onset and
858 remission of uremic symptoms are incompletely described; their pathophysiology is poorly
859 understood; and few drugs have been approved by regulatory authorities for their treatment [214].

860 Comorbidity and complications of CKD also substantially contribute to the reduced QOL in
861 CKD patients. In some cases (e.g. anemia), effective treatments are available. In others, treatment is
862 technically possible but has significant limitations, and treatment itself frequently causes additional
863 symptoms and morbidity (e.g. dialytic management of hypervolemia). Despite the best efforts of
864 clinicians, interactions between complications and their treatments can further compromise QOL for
865 patients (e.g. volume overload resulting from sodium bicarbonate treatment of acidosis).
866 Management of multiple comorbid conditions is already complex in patients with normal kidney
867 function [215]; the situation is even more challenging in people with CKD, where the pathophysiology
868 and optimal treatment of common coexisting conditions may differ from the general population (e.g.
869 statins for coronary disease in dialysis patients). Lack of knowledge about how to prioritize and
870 manage comorbid conditions undoubtedly contributes to the lower QOL in CKD patients through
871 multiple mechanisms – including drug-drug and drug-condition interactions; pill burden; and
872 decisional conflict for patients.

873 Dialysis is an effective life-support treatment but has many limitations in addition to those
874 mentioned above. Key challenges for hemodialysis that specifically compromise QOL include poor

875 functional status (driven in part by procedure-related immobilisation, uremia-related malnutrition,
876 and muscle wasting), the intrusive and time-consuming nature of the treatment, and vascular access
877 infection and dysfunction [216]. Instruction for some home-based, low intensity physicial exercise can
878 improve physical performance and QOL in patients on hemodialysis [217]. Peritoneal dialysis also poses
879 significant challenges for QOL including gastrointestinal distension, hernias, and chronic volume
880 overload. Both forms of dialysis make employment difficult and both are associated with a high
881 prevalence of infectious complications and undue pill burden. Some studies suggest that peritoneal
882 dialysis is associated with slightly better QOL than hemodialysis [218], but it is possible that this
883 observation is confounded by patient characteristics [219]. Home dialysis strategies are constantly
884 improving and are becoming possible tools to improve QOL [220]. Kidney transplantation is associated
885 with substantially better QOL than either form of dialysis [221], but even recipients with good graft
886 function must face CKD-related symptoms as well as complications of immunosuppression and other
887 treatments.

888 Recent emphasis on patient-centred research should help to improve QOL for people with
889 CKD by increasing the likelihood that important but understudied issues such as symptom control are
890 studied and new solutions are identified. In addition, findings from patient-centred research should
891 help to drive uptake of patient-centred care at the bedside, especially if supported by patient-
892 reported outcomes [222]. Such paradigm shifts should help to prioritize the management of patient-
893893 important issues such as reduced QOL.

894894

895 **[H1] Outlook**

896 There are many unmet medical needs in nephrology as a specialty and improving and refining our
897 understanding of disease mechanisms in common and rarer conditions is lacking, as are novel
898 therapies to treat rarer and common causes of kidney disease progression and a culture of curiosity
899 and clinical trials that advance the field [37]. Key areas are to improve the identification of CKD and to
900 reduce CKD risk factors, to improve the understanding of causes and consequences of CKD, to

901 improve outcomes with current knowledge, and finally to develop and test new therapeutic
902 strategies [37]. Here, we highlight eight promising domains expected to produce significant impact on
903 CKD management and outcomes.

904904

905 **[H2]How genetic kidney disease contributes to CKD**

906 Genetic abnormalities were identified in 20% of CKD cases in children, adolescents, and young adults.
907 Next generation sequencing have unveiled the extreme genetic heterogeneity of kidney disease. For
908 example more than 40 different genes were discovered as possible causes of steroid-resistant
909 nephrotic syndrome [142]. This requires implementation of current diagnostic strategies that go beyond
910 th renal biopsy and open to personalized diagnosis and treatments [142]. In addition, first genetic
911 modifiers of CKD progression such as *APOL1* or *UMOD* have been identified in older adults. CKD in
912 adults may also relate to (genetically- or environmentally-defined) low nephron endowment or AKI
913 episodes early in life, e.g. as early as during neonatal (intensive) care. Thus, CKD in adults, often
914 classified by a single diagnosis, may often be the consequence of several components accumulating
915 with time, a conclusion having important implications for the design of CKD trials, e.g. in prevalent
916 entities such as "diabetic nephropathy". Progress will require identifying the cause(s) of CKD and
917 dissecting modifiable from non-modifiable drivers of CKD progression as well as specific
918 pathophysiological mechanisms that might help to define more homogeneous patient subgroups.
919 The identification of such subgroups is a prerequisite to conducting more targeted clinical trials,
920 which require fewer participants and increase the possibility to identify appropriate drugs for
921 different subtypes of patients. Patient heterogeneity is considered one of the main reasons why
922 clinical trials in nephrology commonly fail [223]. Genetic investigations might therefore not only hold
923 promise for individual patients, for example by facilitating the diagnosis of a monogenic disease with
924 potential implications for individualized treatment, but might also improve classification and
925 ultimately treatment and/or prevention in groups of patients [224]. The study of the genetic
926 predisposition to kidney diseases has made major progress over the past decade. For the first time,

927 researchers have been able to carry out genome-wide screens to study complex kidney diseases, to
928 which genetic susceptibility variants in many genes, as well as environmental factors, contribute.
929 Genome-wide association studies (GWAS) have emerged as an important method to map risk loci for
930 complex dis- eases by investigating the association of genetic markers across the genome with the
931 disease of interest. We can predict that the list of genetic forms of CKD will exponentially increase
932 together with our understanding of the genetic component of kidney function in health and disease
933933 [224].
934934

935 [H2]Biomarkers for CKD management

936 As discussed, using serum creatinine-based diagnosis implies diagnosis as late as CKD G3, leaving a
937 small window of opportunity for modulating CKD progression. Earlier identification CKD with
938 biomarkers that can also predict CKD progression would help to initiate nephroprotective
939 interventions [37]. Most attractive would be a marker of nephron number. Defining nephron number at
940 birth would display low nephron endowment and help to dissect it from injury- or ageing-related
941 nephron loss later in life. A marker of nephron number would detect CKD G2 and could serve as an
942 end point parameter for clinical trials to quantify nephro-protective effects or drug toxicity. However,
943 identifying a clinically applicable biomarker of nephron number in serum or urine has been
944 unsuccessful so far. Biomarkers do not clearly discriminate nephron number from the compensatory
945 increase in mass of remnant nephrons upon injury (remnant nephron hypertrophy). Imaging studies
946 with tracers or the combination of imaging with kidney biopsy indicating the number of glomeruli
947 and even SNGFR are promising as a proof-of-concept [85, 225].
948

949 [H2]Separating triggers of nephron loss from CKD progression

950 Congenital low nephron endowment, obesity, and AKI/CKD-related nephron loss imply
951 hyperfiltration and hypertrophy of the remnant nephrons, which in turn promote secondary FSGS
952 and further nephron loss. Interstitial fibrosis most likely represents matrix replacement of lost

953 nephrons, thereby stabilizing the remnant nephrons. Whether fibrosis itself contributes to nephron
954 loss remains under debate and several antifibrotic drugs are under study to test this concept [226, 227].
955 Dissecting the relative contribution of nephron injury, wound healing, and compensatory
956 hyperfiltration remains notoriously difficult in clinical practice. Finding ways to define their relative
957 contribution and selectively target these mechanisms in a personalized manner remains a challenge
958958 for the following years.
959959

960 [H2] Modifying CKD progression

961 Among the many ideas on how to potentially modulate CKD progression some accumulated a large
962 fundament of experimental evidence but still await successful validation in human RCTs (e.g.
963 protecting nephron loss by modulating kidney fibrosis) [228]. In contrast, the idea to retard CKD
964 progression with urate-lowering therapies already showed promising results in smaller trials and the
965 results of ongoing multicenter RCT are eagerly awaited [229]. In contrast, the nuclear factor (erythroid-
966 derived 2)-like (NRF)-2 agonist bardoxolone or folic acid supplementation have shown
967 nephroprotective effects in RCTs in some populations but their mechanisms-of-action are not yet
968 fully understood [182, 230,231].
969969

970 [H2]Nephrogenesis and regeneration

971 Given the significant hurdles preventing widespread use of renal transplantation, Current work is
972 exploring whether the transfer of autologous stem (progenitor) cells, stromal cells or other cell types
973 can support the regeneration of injured nephrons (FIG. 8). For this to be a viable option, a growing
974 research field is trying to unravel the physiology and pathophysiology of the nephron's intrinsic
975 capacity to regenerate.
976 Several studies have identified possible drugable targets to specifically enhance nephron
977 regeneration with pharmacologic intervention to prevent nephron loss in AKI and CKD [232]. In
978 particular, targeting parietal epithelial cells that can act as progenitor for podocytes, to promote

979 their differentiation into fully functional podocytes and/or to block their excessive proliferation and
980 matrix production can promote remission of glomerular disorders [233-235]. In addition, enhancing
981 tubular regeneration by promoting tubular epithelial cell proliferation can reduce the occurrence of
982 CKD after AKI [234, 236]. Although in vivo experimental studies appear promising, no clinical trials are
983 available yet [233-235]. Finally, numerous Inhibitors of maladaptive repair induced improved tissue
984 structure and even function in experimental models of CKD. Several phase 1-2 clinical trials were
985 started but up to now, but none progressed beyond phase 2 [237]. However, other new antifibrotic
986 drugs display are currently being tested in clinical trials [234, 237,238].
987 Regenerative medicine is also being explored for treatment of kidney disorders. Therapeutic
988 properties mesenchymal stroma cells (MSC), a population of well-characterized, easily obtainable
989 cells with effective in numerous but not all experimental models of CKD [239, 240]. The underlying
990 mechanisms of action of the MSC have been extensively described and consist essentially in
991 immunomodulatory and paracrine effects. Similarly, numerous experimental studies reported
992 improvement of kidney function and/or structure by using injection of human renal progenitors [232-
993 236]. However, the translation of preclinical studies into robust, effective, and safe patient therapies
994 remains limited [233, 234,237].
995 Finally, the generation of 3D organ-buds termed 'organoids' from human induced pluripotent stem
996 cells and embryonic stem cells was achieved also for the kidney; these organoids consist of a variety
997 of renal cell types in vitro that mimic organs in vivo [241, 242]. The organoid bears great potential in the
998 study of human diseases in vitro, especially when combined with CRISPR/Cas9-based genome-editing
999 [243, 244]. However, the complexity of kidney structure and function is yet far from being reproduced for
1000 the purpose of clinical use for renal replacement therapy and the question if and when this will be
1001 eventually possible is still open.
1002

1003 **[H2]Animal models and RCT design**

1004 Innovative approaches to better link translational research to clinical trial findings will need to start
1005 with well-defined human genotypes and phenotypes to identify molecular targets, which may (or
1006 may not) subsequently be validated in animal models. Selecting such animal models for validation
1007 should be based on models that recapitulate CKD progression in humans and applying identical end
1008 points in subsequent clinical trials. This may include mice with identical pathogenic mutations as in
1009 human genetic kidney disease as being available for Alport syndrome, mouse models with a partial
1010 human immune system, or eventually experimentation in pigs or primates to close gaps between
1011 preclinical and clinical trials [245, 246].
1012 In addition, trial design may be improved upon reconsidering disease definitions, avoiding
1013 add-on designs using drugs with redundant mechanisms-of-action, preselecting patients with drug
1014 mechanisms-related biomarkers, and of study end points that better predict CKD progression to
1015 ESKD. For example, in order to test efficacy of the C5a receptor inhibitor avacopan in ANCA vasculitis
1016 the CLEAR trial at first avoided the usual add-on standard of care approach and compared instead
1017 avacopan plus low-dose steroids versus placebo plus high dose steroids on top of either
1018 cyclophosphamide or rituximab [247]. This way it was proven that avacopan is effective in replacing
1019 high-dose glucocorticoids in treating vasculitis.
1020
1021 **[H2]Limiting cardiovascular morbidity and mortality**
1022 Targeting the association of CKD with cardiovascular morbidity and mortality will require more
1023 functional studies in animals and humans to identify molecular targets potentially suitable for
1024 therapeutic interventions [37]. Controlling hyperlipidemia with PCSK9 inhibitors, suppressing systemic
1025 inflammation with innovative anti-inflammatory drugs, modulating the intestinal microbiota, or
1026 directly modulating vascular calcificaton and cardiac fibrosis may offer new solutions for this eminent
1027 problem in the future.
1028
1029 **[H2]Translation of advances into daily practice**

1030 The ever growing complexity of kidney biopsy reading, lab diagnostics, and the increasing need for
1031 genetic testing will require centers of excellence with sufficient resources to meet the diagnostic
1032 demands. The same may apply to upcoming costly therapies, where patient selection is of particular
1033 importance. Educational efforts are also needed to alert patients and general physicians to the
1034 increasing number of more affordable therapeutic options for CKD patients with diabetes, such as
1035 SGLT2 inhibitors. Finally, national CKD registries and treatment guidelines advocate awareness in the
1036 public, among health care providers, and decision takers, which can generate important support for
1037 implementation of standards [37]. Global guidelines created by the KDIGO initiative have become

1038 instrumental in this process starting from a global definition of CKD stages up to defining standards
1039 for the management of CKD complications (Box 3). In addition, global initiatives on CKD launched by
1040 the International Society of Nephrology define knowledge gaps in CKD and propose how to address
1041 them in the future [37].
1042

1043 **Acknowledgement.** P.R. was supported by the European Research Council under the Consolidator
1044 Grant RENOIR (ERC-2014-CoG), grant number 648274. H.J.A. received support by the Deutsche
1045 Forschungsgemeinschaft (AN372/24-1). H.J.A and G.R. received support from the European Union's
1046 research and innovation program (under grant agreement Horizon 2020, NEPHSTROM No. 634086).
1047 The views expressed here are the responsibility of the authors only. The EU Commission takes no
1048 responsibility for any use made of the information set out.
1049

1050 **Contributions.** P.R., G.R., R.G., A.L., K.J.J., M.T., Z.M., C.W., and H.J.A. all wrote parts of the
1051 manuscript.
1052

1053 **Box 1. Risk factors for chronic kidney disease**

1054 - Diabetes mellitus (type 1 or 2)
1055 - Poorly controlled arterial hypertension
1056 - Obesity
1057 - Monogenetic kidney disease (for example, autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease,
1058 podocytopathies causing steroid-resistant nephrotic syndrome, Fabry's disease and Alport
1059 syndrome, complementopathies such as atypical haemolytic-uremic syndrome (aHUS)
1060 - Prolonged exposure to nephrotoxins (e.g., chemotherapy for cancer treatment, proton pump
1061 inhibitors, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, and anti-microbial agents), contaminated
1062 herbs, agricultural chemicals, heavy metals, irradiation)
1063 - Climate (excessive heat exposure and dehydration)
1064 - Infections and chronic inflammation (HIV, HCV, HBV, malaria, bacterial infections urinary

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tract infections, rheumatic disorders and autoimmune diseases)

- Malignancy (especially lymphocyte and plasma cell disorders such as multiple myeloma)

- Congenital renal abnormalities (CAKUT, vesico-ureteric reflux)

- Episodes of acute kidney injury

- Low nephron endowment at birth (low birth weight, fetal dysmaturity)

- Obstructive uropathy

- Systemic vasculitis

- Hyperhomocysteinemia

1077 **Box 2. Biochemical and serologic tests useful for defining causes of CKD**

1078 **[H1]*Auto-immune disease***

1079 • Fluorescent anti-nuclear antibody, anti-dsDNA antibody, anti-phospholipaseA2 receptor
1080 antibody, anti-GBM antibody, anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibody, anti-phospholipid
1081 antibody
1082 • Serum hemolytic complement activity (C'H50), serum C3 and C4 levels, cryoimmunoglobulins

1083 **[H1]*Malignancy***

1084 • Serum free light chains, serum or urinary immunofixation (multiple myeloma)
1085 • Serum albumin, phosphorous, total proteins and albumin/globulin ratio

1086 **[H1]*Infections***

1087 • Human Immunodeficiency Virus, hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C virus serology, CD4+ T cell
1088 counts, urine, blood cultures, anti-streptococcal antibody tests

1089 **[H1]*Monogenetic kidney disease***

1090 • Serum or urinary enzymes, glycolipids
1091 • Genetic testing using next generation and Sanger sequencing

1092

1093 **Box 3. Key strategies to managing CKD complications**

1094 **[H1]Renal anemia** [187]

1095 • Erythropoeiesis stimulating agents (ESAs) are only given once all correctable causes of
1096 anemia (e.g. iron deficiency and inflammatory states) have been addressed
1097 • Adults received Iron supplementation when transferrin saturation is <30% and ferritin <500
1098 ng/ml; children (<18 years) receive Iron supplementation when transferrin saturation is
1099 <20% and ferritin <100 ng/ml
1100 • ESAs may be used to avoid hemoglobin <9.0 g/l with a target of max.11.5 g/dl
1101 • Avoid blood transfusion whenever possible, especially in potential transplant recipients.
1102 Caution in giving ESAs in people at risk of stroke or who have malignancy

1103 **[H1]Arterial hypertension** [188]

1104 • Individualize blood pressure (BP) targets are based on age and co-morbidities, with special
1105 recommendations for diabetes
1106 • Targets include normalizing body weight (BMI 20-25), NaCl intake (<5g/d), achieving regular
1107 physical exercise, limiting alcohol intake to 2 drinks/d (men), 1 drink/day (women)

1108 **[H1]Mineral and bone disorder** [189, 248]

1109 • Monitor calcium, phosphorus, parathyroid hormone, and alkaline phosphatase activityin
1110 adults beginning in CKD G3a and in children beginning in with CKD G2 ; 25(OH)D levels
1111 might also be measured and corrected by vitamin D supplementation as for the general
1112 population
1113 • In CKD G3a-G5D lower elevated phosphate levels toward the normal range but avoid
1114 hypercalcemia by restricting the dose of calcium-based phosphate binders
1115 • Avoid long-term exposure to aluminium in phosphate binders or dialysate
1116 • Measure bone mass density in patients with CKD G3a-G5D with evidence of bone disease to
1117 assess fracture risk if results will impact treatmentIn adults calcitriol and vitamin D

analogues are no longer recommended for routine use unless secondary hyperparathyroidism in CKD G4-G5 is severe and progressive

- For patients with CKD G5D PTH-lowering therapy calcimimetics, calcitriol, or vitamin D analogs are recommended
- Consider patients with vascular calcifications at high risk for cardiovascular disease; avoid calcium-based phosphate binders in these patients, limit dietary phosphate intake.

[H1]Hyperlipidemia [249]

- Adults >50y with CKD should receive a statin; when eGFR <60ml/min, statin or statin/ezetimibe combination should be given
- Adults <50y with CKD and other cardiovascular risk factors should receive a statin

[H1]Metabolic acidosis

- Oral bicarbonate can be used to correct mild metabolic acidosis

[H1]Chronic hyperkalemia

- Dietary restriction, loop diuretics, potassium-binding resins such as patiromer or dose

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1142 **Figure legends**

1143

1144 **Figure 1. Kidney Disease Improving Global Outcomes (KDIGO) classification of chronic kidney**
1145 **disease (CKD).** The 2D matrix illustrates the predictive value of different levels of albuminuria and
1146 estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR). The color code indicates the risk for CKD progression to
1147 end-stage kidney disease (ESKD) and overall mortality. This matrix defines different stages of CKD
1148 referred as, for example, CKD G2A2 whereby the eGFR is 60-89 ml/min/1.73m^2 albuminuria is
1149 moderately increased; such a patient would have a moderately increased risk of progressing to ESKD.
1150 This staging system for CKD G2-G4 may underestimate the extent of irreversible nephron loss [251].
1151 That is, if total GFR relies on the single nephron GFR (SNGFR) and the number of nephrons, SNGFR
1152 has to increase to compensate for reduced (or declining) number of nephrons to maintain total GFR.
1153 However, such a compensation may not occur with physiological ageing [85]. Additionally, total GFR
1154 drops if remnant nephrons are not able to increase SNGFR. Finally, increases in serum creatinine
1155 levels (representing a GFR of ≤40%) may imply remnant nephrons of ≤30% of a "normal" nephron
1156 number. Furthermore, the prognosis facet of CKD classification has been developed by large-scale
1157 population-based epidemiological studies, which suffer from a "false positive" rate of- approximately
1158 30-35% as in such studies repeat analysis after 3 months was often not available [43]. Reprinted with
1159 permission from Kidney Disease: Improving Global Outcomes (KDIGO) CKD Work Group.
1160 KDIGO clinical practice guideline for the evaluation and management of chronic kidney disease.
1161 Kidney Int Suppl. 2013;3:1-150.

1162

1163 **Figure 2. Global prevalence of treated end-stage kidney disease per 1 million population**. The map
1164 depicts the prevalence of renal replacement therapy represented by kidney replacement therapy
1165 (kidney replacement therapy: hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, and kidney transplantation), for
1166 [Au:OK?ok] ESKD per 1 million population based on individual country data. Data not available
1167 indicates that data were either not known or not provided on the questionnaire for countries that

1168 received the survey. Reprinted with permission from Bello, A. K. et al. Assessment of
1169 Global Kidney Health Care Status. JAMA 317, 1864-1881 (2017
1170
1171 **Figure 3. Glomerular filtration rate (GFR) over time and impact of low birth weight on progression**
1172 **of CKD.** A. Population studies assessing estimated GFR document a decline in eGFR with age; here
1173 the data in men from Marocco are shown [43]. P values from P03-P97 represent the percentiles of the
1174 entire population with P50 representing mean values. This decline is a consequence of loss of
1175 functioning nephrons via glomerulosclerosis-related nephron atrophy and is not accompanied by a
1176 compensatory increase in SNGFR in the remaining intact nephrons, unlike what occurs when
1177 nephrons are lost by injury or surgery [42, 52, 85]. At age 70, nephron number is around 50% of that at
1178 age 25. Whether or not this implies increased SNGFR (single nephron hyperfiltration) of remnant
1179 nephrons or mirrors the declining demand for filtering metabolic waste is under debate but will
1180 strongly depend on co-morbidities such as obesity and the life time history of acute kidney injury
1181 episodes. In such cases, SNGFR should correlate with the total number of nephrons per body mass. B:
1182 Low birth weight (LBW) increases four-fold the relative risk to develop CKD by the age 17 as shown
1183 by population studies [69]. C: LBW status also significantly shortens the time span of when patients
1184 with IgA nephropathy reach end stage kidney disease [70].
1185
1186 **Figure 4. Contributing factors to nephron loss.** In addition to ageing, acute and chronic forms of
1187 kidney injuries further may contribute to nephron loss along life time. Environmental, genetic causes
1188 and systemic disease-related reasons for low nephron endowment or causes of nephron injury are
1189 shown during the different phases in life, when they are most commonly (but not exclusively)
1190 encountered. Combinations of such causes determine the individual risk for CKD throughout life. For
1191 example, congenital abnormalities of the urinary tract (CAKUT) can lead to end stage kidney disease
1192 (ESKD) early in life, or to secondary focal segmental glomerulosclerosis (FSGS)-related ESKD later in
1193 life. Nephrotoxic drugs such as antibiotics, pain killers, contrast media for imaging or chemotherapy

1194 can also influence risk, as can infections (bacterial, parasitic, viral). Severe genetic defects that lead to
1195 FSGS, Alport syndrome, cysts and atypical hemolytic uremic syndrome typically become evident early
1196 in life, whereas moderate genetic defects (such as mutation in *UMOD*) can become evident in
1197 adulthood. Genetic variants in genes such as *APOL1* can modify the course of diseases such as lupus
1198 nephritis.
1199
1200 **Figure 5. Injury, hyperfiltration and hypertrophy of the nephron.** A | In response to nephron loss,
1201 single nephron hyperfiltration induces an increase in nephron size as a compensatory mechanism to
1202 maintain overall renal function. Accordingly, podocytes need to undergo hypertrophy to maintain the
1203 filtration barrier of the increasing dimensions of the filtration surface. However, podocyte
1204 hypertrophy is limited; beyond a certain threshold, barrier dysfunction first manifests as mild to
1205 moderate proteinuria. At later stages the increasing podocyte shear stress promotes podocyte
1206 detachment. Parietal epithelial cells (PEC) host putative podocyte progenitors but proteinuria and
1207 potentially other factors inhibit their potential to replace lost podocytes and rather promote scar
1208 formation, i.e. focal segmental glomerulosclerosis (FSGS). B | Hyperfiltration and proteinuria both
1209 imply an increased reabsorption work load for proximal tubules. Activated tubular cells secrete pro-
1210 inflammatory mediators that promote interstitial inflammation. Together with the progression from
1211 FSGS to global glomerulosclerosis the inflammatory microenvironment of the tubulointerstitium
1212 promotes tubular atrophy and interstitial fibrosis. Scar formation is associated with vascular
1213 rarefication and ischemia. The remnant nephrons have to further increase in size to meet the
1214 filtration demands, which accelerates the aforementioned mechanisms of CKD progression in a
1215 vicious circle.
1216 **Figure 6. The earlier-the-better: renal outcome depending on when starting renin-angiotensin**
1217 **system (RAS) blockade in Alport Syndrome.** As shown, the time to renal replacement therapy was
1218 longest for those who started RAS inhibition early, at onset of microhematuria (usually at birth) or
1219 microalbuminuria (30-300 mg protein per day or per gram creatinine). Delaying until

1220 macroproteinuria (>0.3g/day or per gram creatinine (green curve)) or CKD G3/4 has been established

1221 considerably shortens the time to renal replacement. Untreated patients (red curve) are relatives to

1222 Reprinted with permission from Gross, O. et al. Early angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibition in Alport syndrome delays renal failure and improves life expectancy. Kidney Int 81, 494-501 (2012).

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1225

1226 **Figure 7. Access for hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis. A |** Arteriovenous fistulae are created by

1227 surgical anastomosis of a peripheral artery with a larger subcutaneous vein, e.g. at the forearm. The

1228 increased flow and perfusion pressure leads to structural modifications in the draining vein allowing

1229 repetitive venous puncture for hemodialysis. Sometimes declining blood flow to the hand and fingers

1230 (steal phenomonen), compensatory increases in cardiac output or aneurysm formation cause

1231 problems and require surgical correction. B | Arteriovenous grafts may become necessary when the

1232 patient`s vascular status does not allow to build a fistula. Polytetrafluoroethylene grafts are mostly

1233 used and can be repetitively punctured for hemodialysis. Common problems are sterile inflammatory

1234 postimplantation syndromes or prosthetic graft infections causing bacterial sepsis. C | Central

1235 venous catheters become necessary when immediate initiation of renal replacement therapy is

1236 needed up to when a fistula or graft implant becomes ready for use. Such catheters may remain the

1237 last vascular access option for patients in which the vascular or cardiac status does not allow fistula

1238 or graft placement. Catheter infections or thrombotic complications remain constant concerns.

1239 Peritoneal dialysis requires placement of a transcutaneous catheter into the peritoneal cavity. This

1240 catheter allows fills, drains and refills of dialysate while the peritoneum serves as exchange

1241 membrane with the uremic blood. Fluid drains and refills with fresh dialysate are needed in regular

1242 intervals, usually 4 times a day.

1243

1244 **Figure 8. Targeting kidney regeneration.** In the future, it may be possible to target kidney

1245 regeneration and maladaptive repair to minimize the loss of injured nephrons and to protect the

1246 remnant nephrons. Here, the most promising arenas of research include: 1. Enhancing podocyte
1247 regeneration. This aim may be achieved by drugs that promote differentiation into podocyte of
1248 parietal epithelial cell (PEC) progenitors of the Bowman's capsule and/or blocking their excessive
1249 proliferation. 2. Blocking fibrosis and/or maladaptive repair by inhibiting fibroblast expansion. 3.
1250 Enhancing tubular regeneration by blocking maladaptive repair and/or enhancing tubular cell
1251 proliferation [233-238].
1252

1253 **Figure 9. Cell therapy and organoids as potential tools in CKD research and therapy.** (A) Injection of
1254 two cell types, mesenchymal stromal cells and renal progenitors, were reported as possible tools for
1255 cell therapy of CKD, improving kidney function and structure in animal models. Numerous phase 1-2
1256 clinical trials are ongoing. Several mechanisms were proposed to explain the beneficial effects
1257 observed, mostly based on secretion of paracrine factors and/or microvesicles. For renal progenitors
1258 also direct engraftment in the injured tissue was reported. (B) Kidney organoids were generated in
1259 vitro starting from induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSC) and embryonic stem cells (ESC) and used for
1260 testing of drug toxicity and modeling of kidney diseases, with or without manipulation using
1261 Crispr/Cas and other genome editing strategies.
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1272 **Table 1. Therapeutic interventions for selected conditions associated with CKD risk**

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Disease entity	Diagnostic test	Therapeutic interventions
Genetic injury		
Polycystic kidney disease	Echography or MRI to detect cysts	Tolvaptan (vasopressin receptor 2 antagonist of benefit in selected patients)
Alport syndrome	Genetic testing for collagen mutations	ACE inhbitors to reduce filtration pressure in remnant nephrons
Fabry disease	Serum alpha-galactosidase activity	Alpha-galactosidase replacement therapy
Primary hyperoxaluria	Echography to detect nephrocalcinosis, urinary oxalate levels, genetic testing for serine—pyruvate aminotransferase , glyoxylate reductase/hydroxypyruvate reductase, and dihydrodipicolinate synthase-like	Increase fluid intake, supplementation with potassium citrate, magnesium oxide, pyridoxine , and orthophosphate, oxalate-reduced diet, liver transplantation
Cystinosis	Leukocyte cystine levels, slit lamp exam of the eyes, genetic testing for the cystinosin gene	Cysteamine substitution
Coenzyme Q10-related gene mutations causing FSGS	Genetic testing for AarF Domain Containing Kinase-4, coenzyme Q2, coenzyme Q6, and decaprenyl diphosphate synthase subunit 2	Coenzyme Q10 replacement therapy
C3 glomerulonephritis	Kidney biopsy, specific complement test, genetic testing for complement-related genes	Plasma exchange or blood transfusion, rituximab, eculizumab (depending on specific cause)
Immune injury		
Acute or subacute immune complex glomerulonephritis	Autoantibodies against nuclear autoantigens or neutrophil cytoplasmic antigens such as proteinase 3 or myeloperoxidase,	Immunosuppressive drugs, plasma exchange (in certain settings)

	C3/C4 serum levels urinary sediment, kidney biopsy	
Renal vasculitis	ANCAs, urinary sediment, kidney biopsy	Immunosuppressive drugs, plasma exchange (in certain settings)
Vascular injury		
Recent onset renal artery stenosis (fibromuscular or vasculitic)	Angiogram of the renal arteries	Surgical revascularization or catheter-based angioplasty
Metabolic injury		
Diabetic kidney disease	Blood glucose level, albuminuria, kidney biopsy	Antidiabetic drugs, SGLT2 blockade, RAS inhibitors
Chronic urate nephropathy	Tophaceous gout, serum uric acid levels, kidney biopsy	Purine-reduced diet, uricosuric drugs, xanthine oxidase inhibitors, rasburicase
Toxic injury		
Toxic nephropathies (lead, aristolochic acid, phenacetin, …)	History, specific toxin levels, kidney biopsy	Abandon toxin exposure
Multiple myeloma	Serum or urinary free light chain test, bone marrow aspirate, kidney biopsy	Myeloma-directed chemotherapy
Kidney infections		
Bacterial pyelonephritis	Urine culture	Increased fluid intake, antibiotics
Viral nephropathies	Viral testing, kidney biopsy	Antiviral therapy
Mechanical injury		
Obstructive nephropathy	Renal ultrasound	Relieve obstruction

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Outlook

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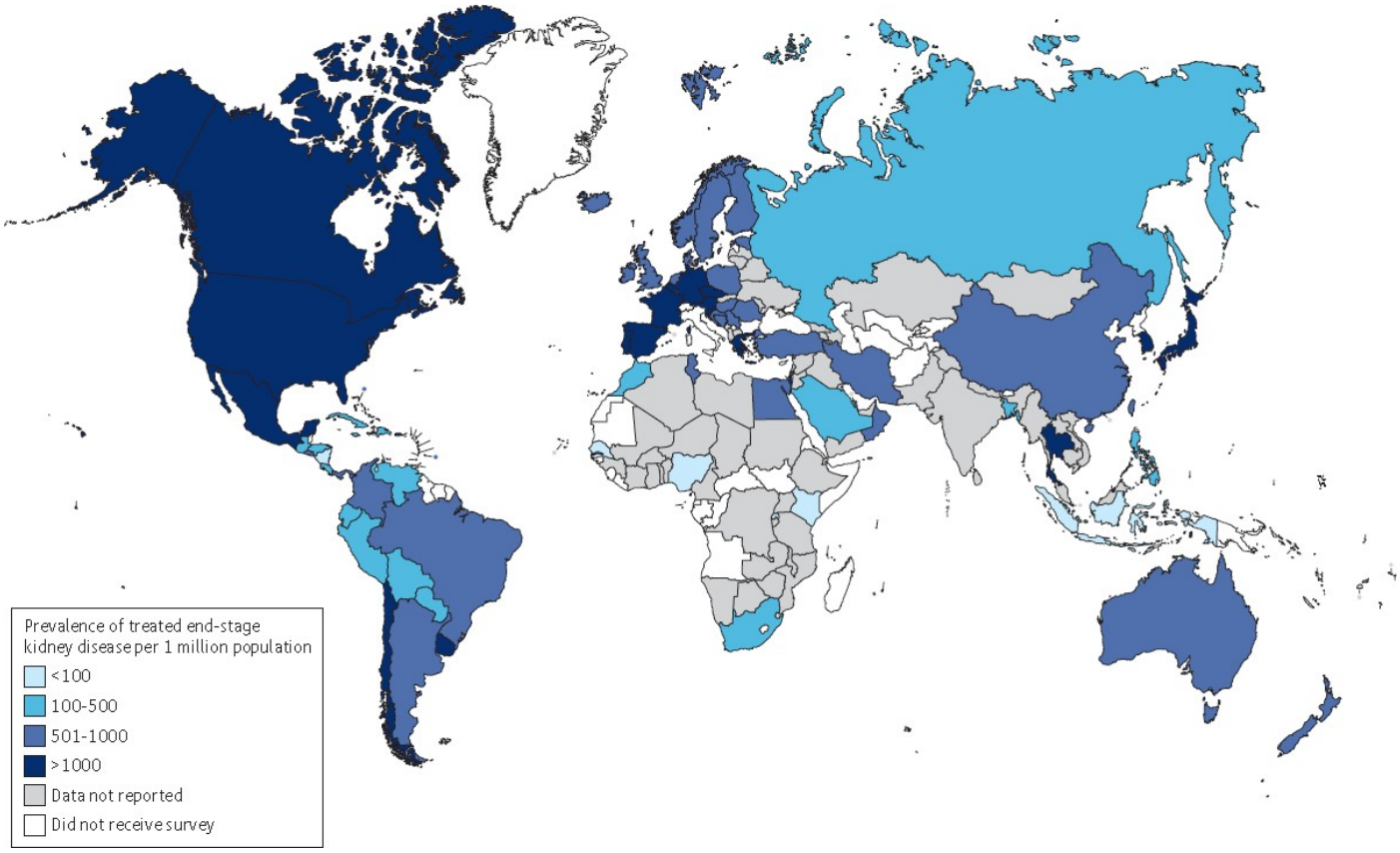
gure 1

Prognosis of CKD by GFR and Albuminuria Categories: KDIGO 2012

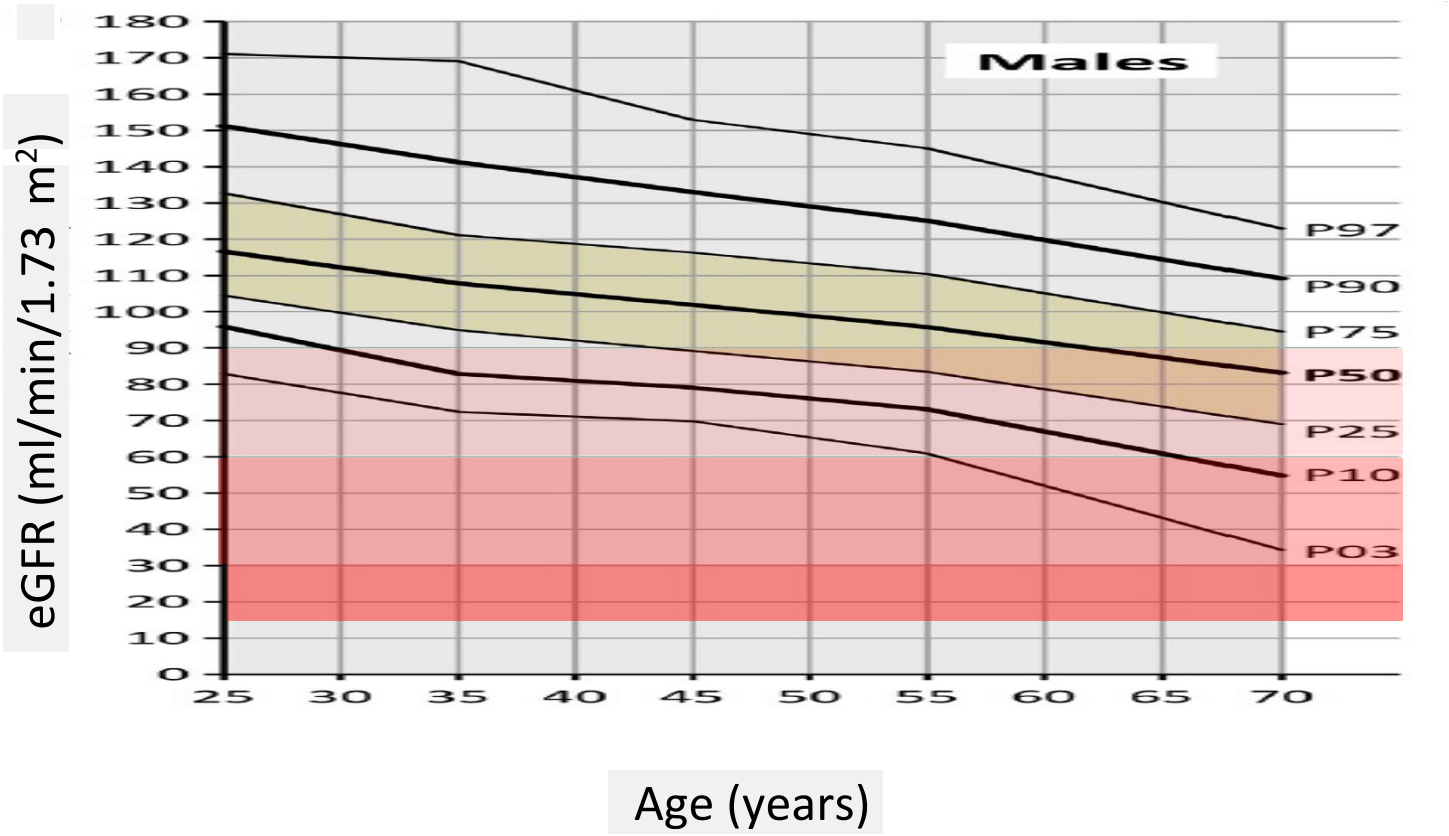
GFR categories (ml/min/ 1.73 m^2) Description and range			Persistent albuminuria categories Description and range		
			A1 Normal to mildly increased	A2 Moderately increased	A3 Severely increased
			<30 mg/g <3 mg/mmol	30-300 mg/g 3-30 mg/mmol	>300 mg/g >30 mg/mmol
G1	Normal or high	≥90			
G2	Mildly decreased	60-89			
G3a	Mildly to moderately decreased	45-59			
G3b	Moderately to severely decreased	30-44			
G4	Severely decreased	15-29			
G5	Kidney failure	<15			

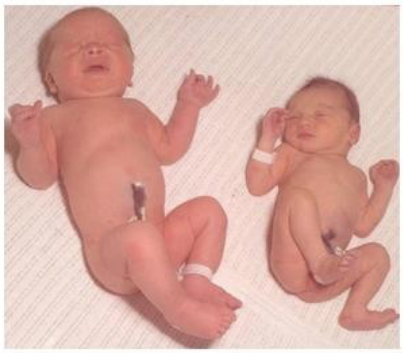
Green: low risk (if no other markers of kidney disease, no CKD); Yellow: moderately increased risk; Orange: high risk; Red, very high risk.

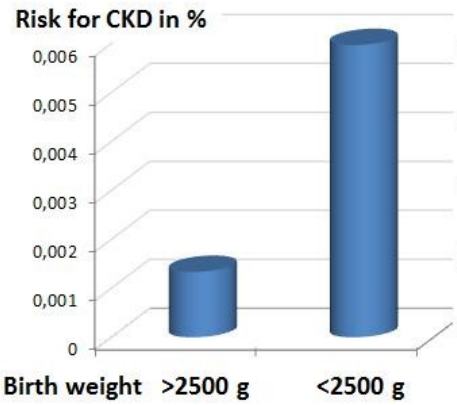
gure 2

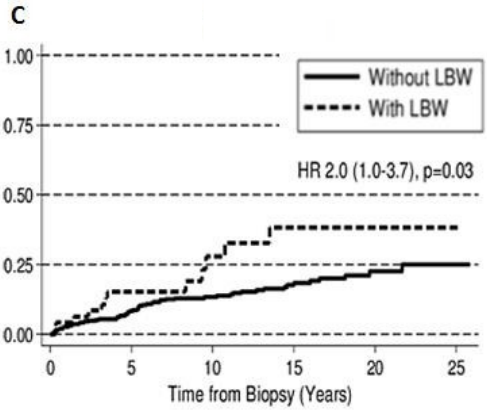

Prevalence of treated end-stage kidney disease per 1 million population
<100
100-500
501-1000
>1000
Data not reported
Did not receive survey

gure 3

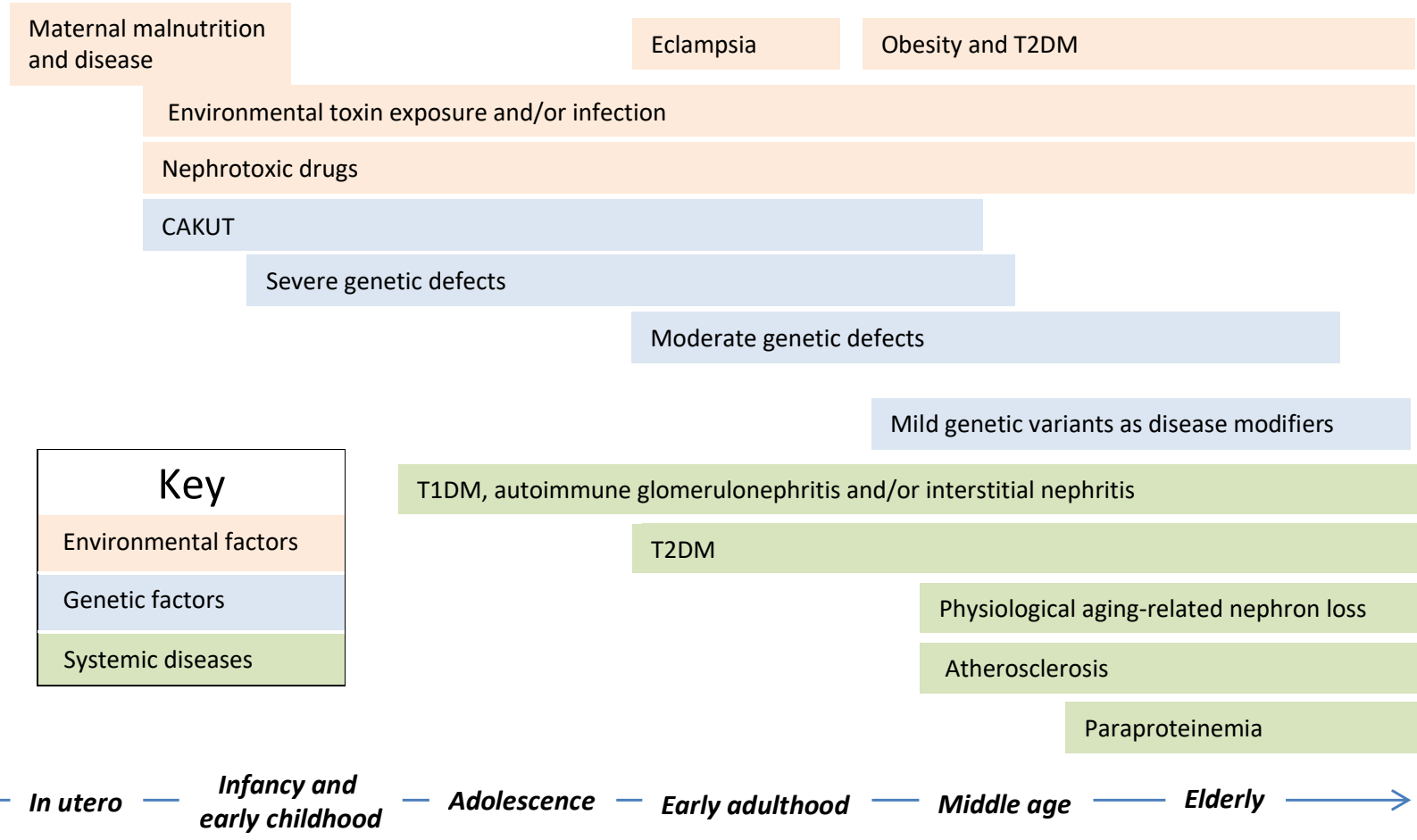

Males
eGFR (ml/min/1.73 m²)
180
170
160
150
140
130
120
110
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
25
30
35
40
45
50
55
60
65
70
P97
P90
P75
P50
P25
P10
P03
Age (years)



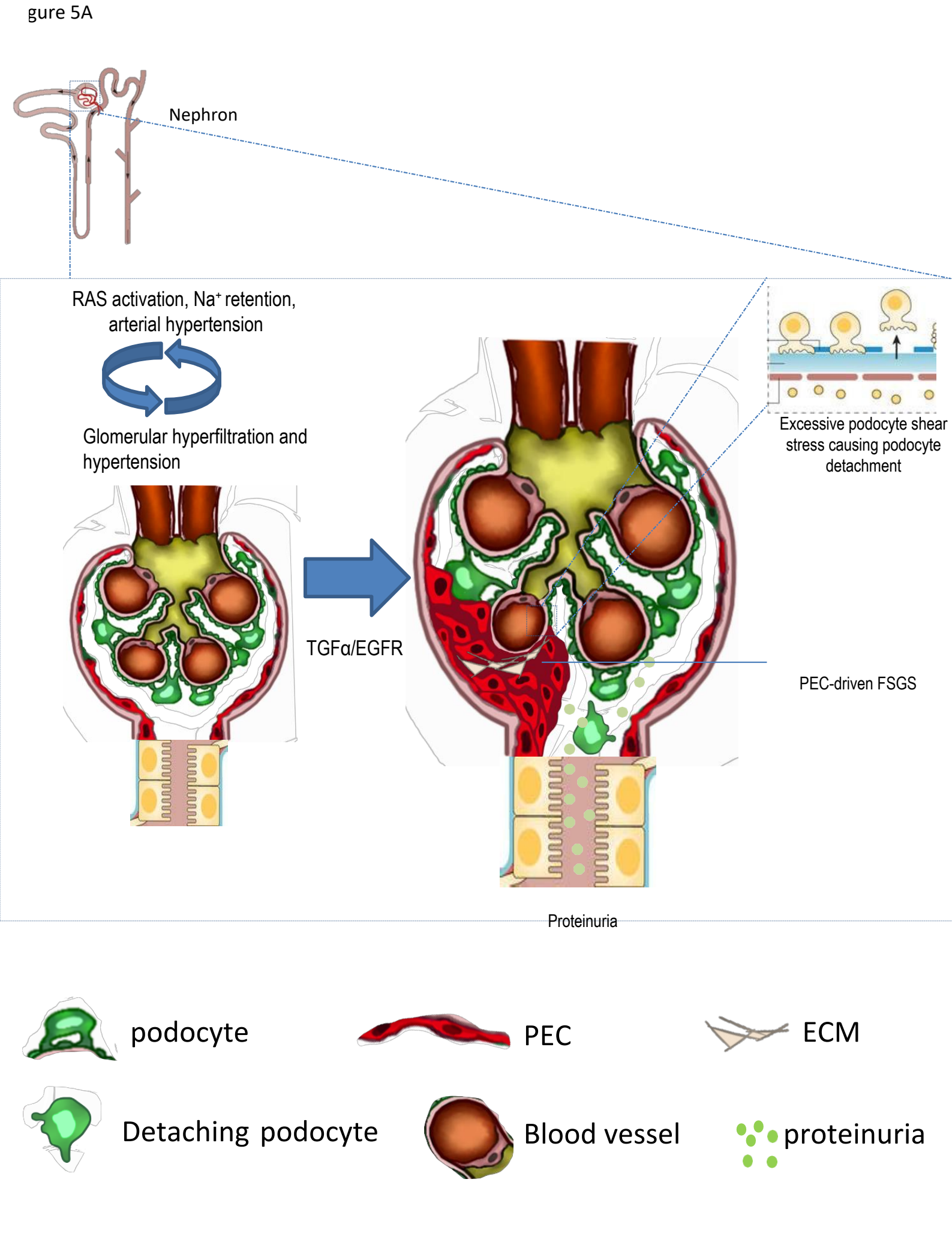

Risk for CKD in %
0,006
0,005
0,004
0,003
0,002
0,001
0
Birth weight >2500 g
<2500 g


C
1.00
0.75
0.50
0.25
0.00
Without LBW
With LBW
HR 2.0 (1.0-3.7), p=0.03
0
5
10
15
20
25
Time from Biopsy (Years)

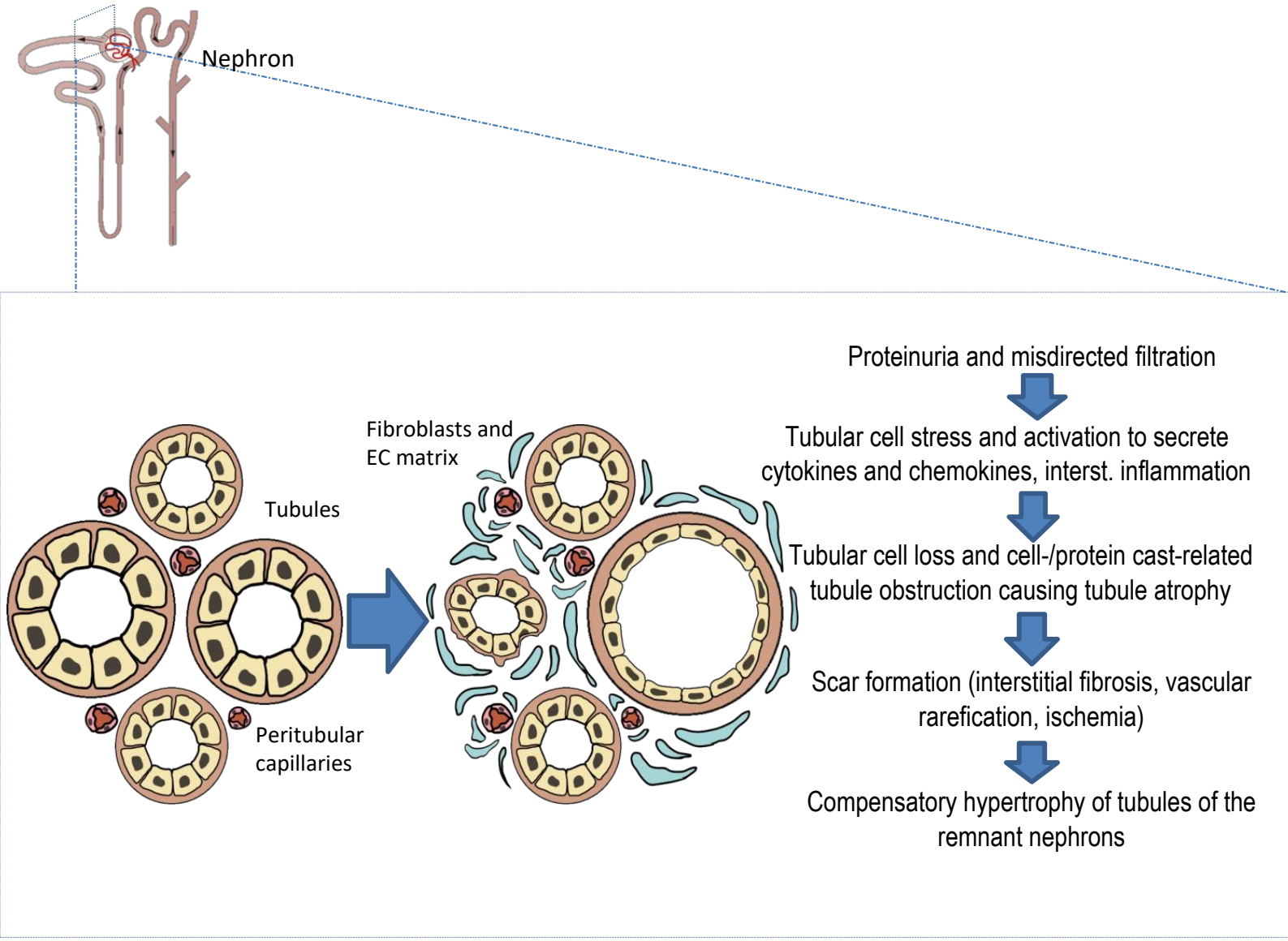
gure 4


Maternal malnutrition and disease
Eclampsia
Obesity and T2DM
Environmental toxin exposure and/or infection
Nephrotoxic drugs
CAKUT
Severe genetic defects
Moderate genetic defects
Mild genetic variants as disease modifiers
Key
Environmental factors
Genetic factors
Systemic diseases
T1DM, autoimmune glomerulonephritis and/or interstitial nephritis
T2DM
Physiological aging-related nephron loss
Atherosclerosis
Paraproteinemia
In utero
Infancy and early childhood
Adolescence
Early adulthood
Middle age
Elderly

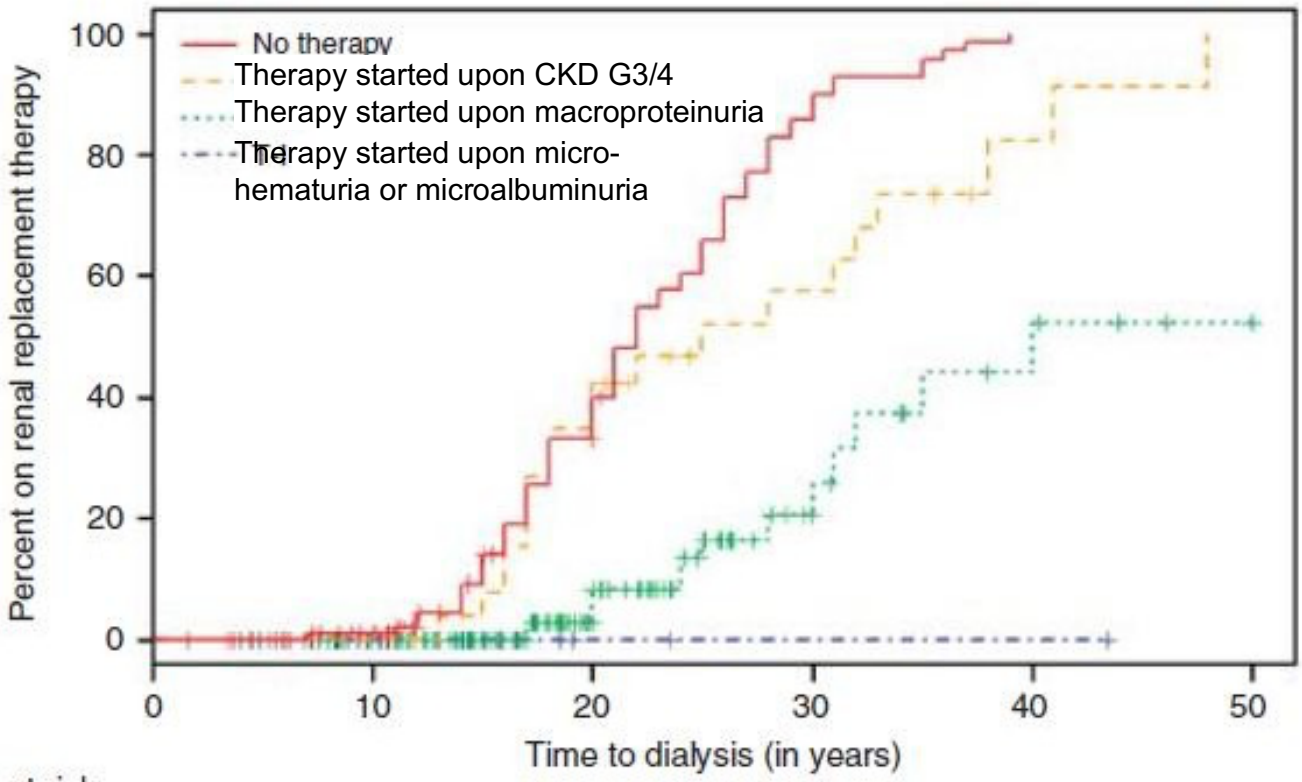
gure 5A


Nephron
RAS activation, Na+ retention, arterial hypertension
Glomerular hyperfiltration and hypertension
TGFα/EGFR
Excessive podocyte shear stress causing podocyte detachment
PEC-driven FSGS
Proteinuria
podocyte
PEC
ECM
Detaching podocyte
Blood vessel
proteinuria

gure 5B


Nephron
Tubules
Peritubular capillaries
Fibroblasts and EC matrix
Proteinuria and misdirected filtration
Tubular cell stress and activation to secrete cytokines and chemokines, interst. inflammation
Tubular cell loss and cell-/protein cast-related tubule obstruction causing tubule atrophy
Scar formation (interstitial fibrosis, vascular rarefication, ischemia)
Compensatory hypertrophy of tubules of the remnant nephrons

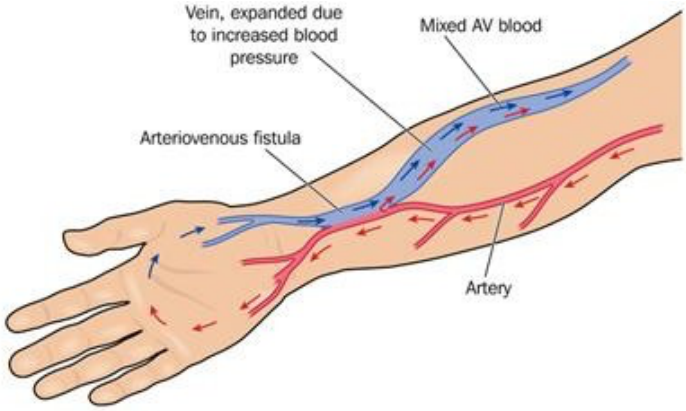
gure 6



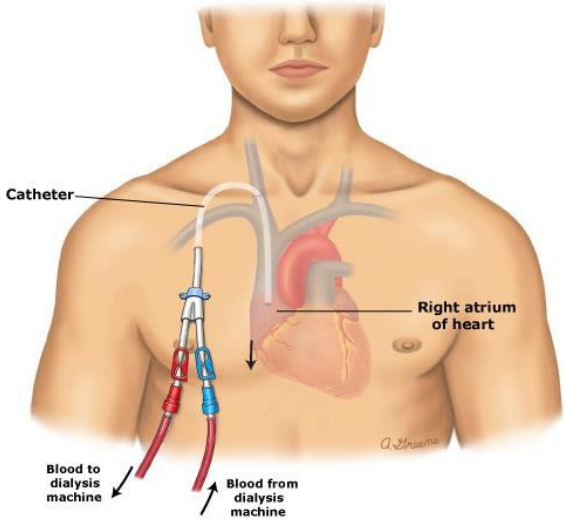
No. at risk											
No therapy	109	105	96	75	50	29	10	5	0	0	0
T-III	26	26	26	25	17	10	8	5	2	1	0
T-II	115	113	105	84	52	31	15	9	7	4	3
T-I	33	32	20	8	2	1	1	1	1	0	0

gure 7

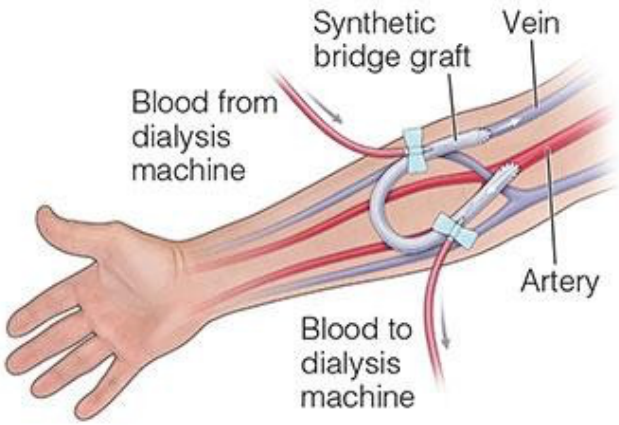
A


Vein, expanded due to increased blood pressure
Mixed AV blood
Arteriovenous fistula
Artery

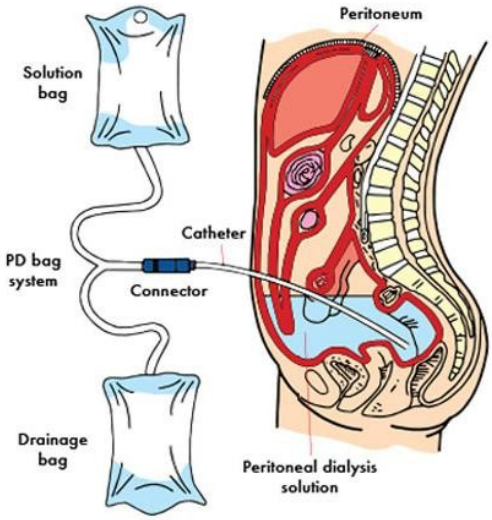
C


Catheter
Right atrium of heart
Blood to dialysis machine
Blood from dialysis machine

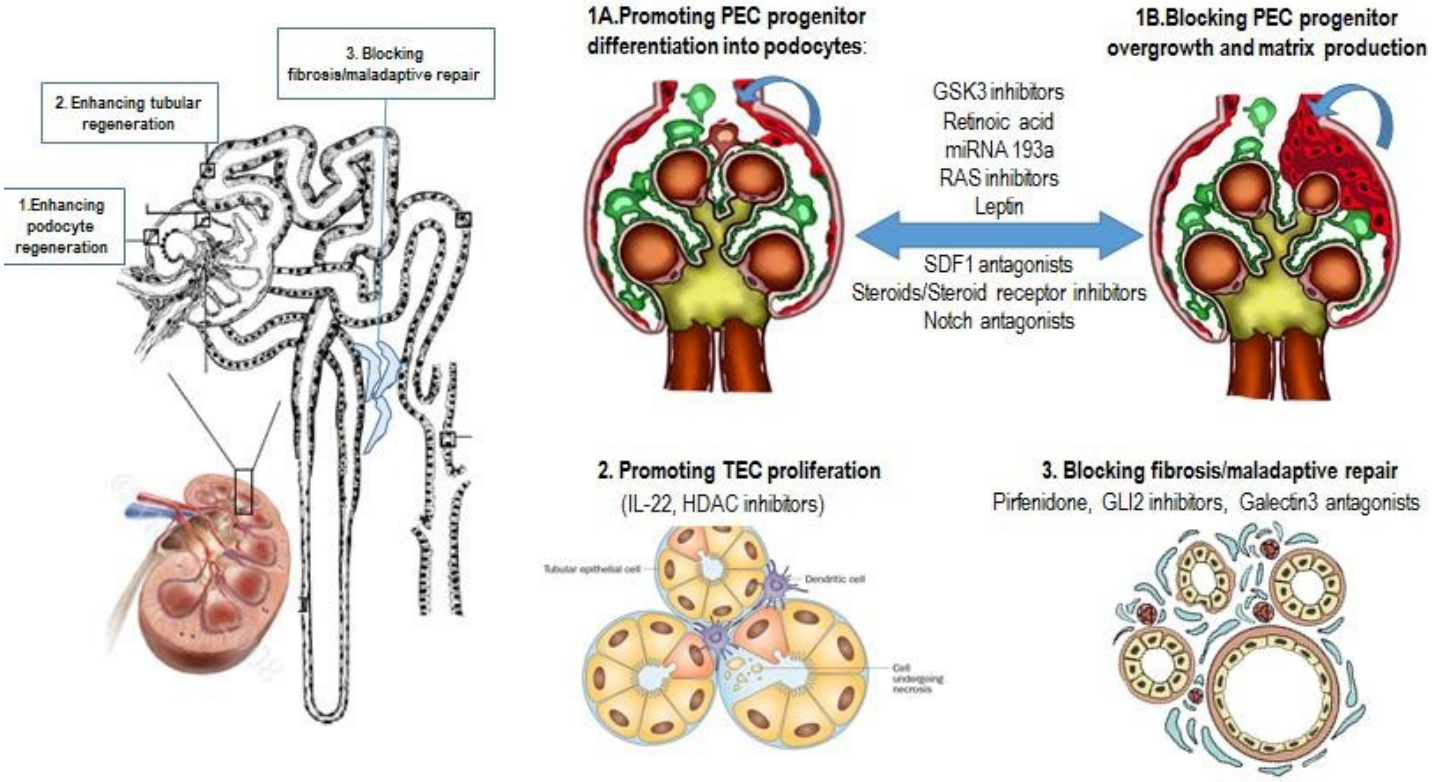
B


Synthetic bridge graft
Vein
Blood from dialysis machine
Artery
Blood to dialysis machine

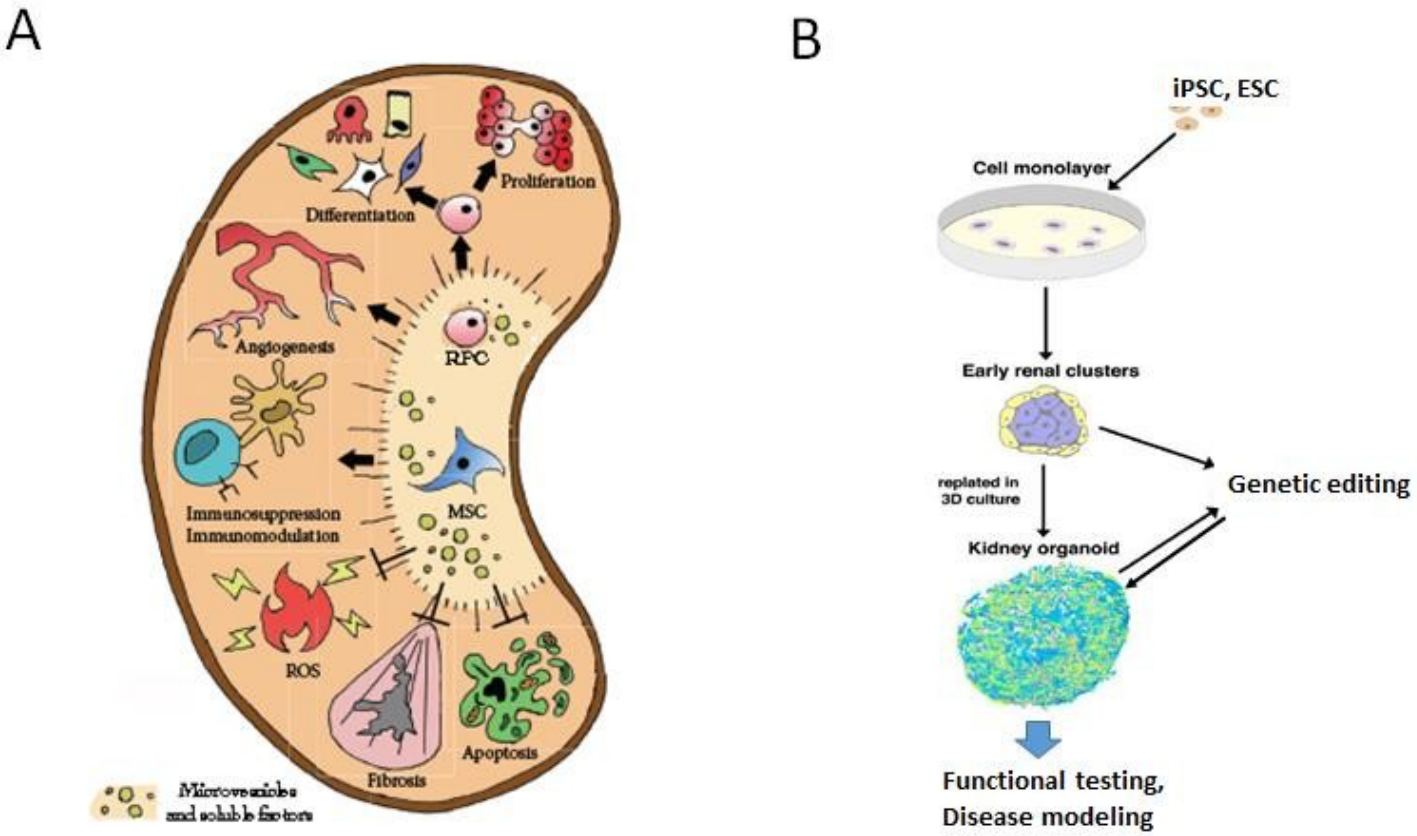
D


Peritoneum
Solution bag
Catheter
PD bag system
Connector
Drainage bag
Peritoneal dialysis solution

gure 8


3. Blocking fibrosis/maladaptive repair
2. Enhancing tubular regeneration
1.Enhancing podocyte regeneration
1A.Promoting PEC progenitor differentiation into podocytes:
1B.Blocking PEC progenitor overgrowth and matrix production
GSK3 inhibitors
Retinoic acid
miRNA 193a
RAS inhibitors
Leptin
SDF1 antagonists
Steroids/Steroid receptor inhibitors
Notch antagonists
2. Promoting TEC proliferation
(IL-22, HDAC inhibitors)
Tubular epithelial cell
Dendritic cell
Cell undergoing necrosis
3. Blocking fibrosis/maladaptive repair
Pirfenidone, GLI2 inhibitors, Galectin3 antagonists

gure 9


A
Differentiation
Proliferation
Angiogenesis
RPC
Immunosuppression
Immunomodulation
MSC
ROS
Fibrosis
Apoptosis
Microvesicles
and soluble factors
B
iPSC, ESC
Cell monolayer
Early renal clusters
replated in
3D culture
Genetic editing
Kidney organoid
Functional testing,
Disease modeling