
Glossary of Terms: Polycystic Kidney Disease

Public Education

ACE Inhibitors: Medications that help relax blood vessels and reduce blood pressure, commonly used to treat hypertension in PKD patients.

Angiotensin II Receptor Blockers (ARBs): Medications that block the action of angiotensin II, a substance that narrows blood vessels, thereby lowering blood pressure.

Autosomal Dominant Polycystic Kidney Disease (ADPKD): The most common form of PKD, inherited in an autosomal dominant pattern, where cysts form in the kidneys and other organs.

Autosomal Recessive Polycystic Kidney Disease (ARPKD): A rarer form of PKD inherited in an autosomal recessive pattern, usually affecting infants and young children.

Blood Urea Nitrogen (BUN): A waste product in the blood that is measured to assess kidney function.

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD): A long-term condition where the kidneys do not work effectively, often resulting from PKD.

Computed Tomography (CT) Scan: An imaging method that uses X-rays to create detailed cross-sectional images of the body, used to visualize kidney cysts in PKD.

Continuous Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis (CAPD): A type of peritoneal dialysis that is done manually by the patient throughout the day.

Creatinine: A waste product from muscle metabolism that is measured in the blood to assess kidney function.

Cysts: Fluid-filled sacs that form in the kidneys and other organs in individuals with PKD.

Deceased Donor Transplant: A kidney transplant from a person who has recently died and whose family has consented to organ donation.

Dialysate: A sterile solution used in peritoneal dialysis to draw waste products and excess fluids from the blood.

Dialysis: A treatment that removes waste products and excess fluids from the blood when the kidneys can no longer perform these functions.

End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD): The final stage of chronic kidney disease, where the kidneys are no longer able to function properly, requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant.

Fistula: A surgically created connection between an artery and a vein, used to provide access for hemodialysis.

Hemodialysis: A type of dialysis where blood is filtered outside the body using a machine called a dialyzer.

Hypertension: High blood pressure, a common symptom and complication of PKD.

Immunosuppressive Medications: Drugs that suppress the immune system to prevent rejection of a transplanted kidney.

Kidney Transplantation: A surgical procedure that replaces a damaged kidney with a healthy one from a donor.

Living Donor Transplant: A kidney transplant from a living person, usually a family member or friend.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI): An imaging technique that uses magnetic fields and radio waves to create detailed images of the body, used to assess kidney cysts in PKD.

mTOR Pathway: A cellular pathway involved in cell growth and proliferation, targeted by certain drugs to reduce cyst growth in PKD.

Peritoneal Dialysis: A type of dialysis that uses the lining of the abdomen to filter waste products and excess fluids from the blood.

Polycystin: Proteins produced by the PKD1 and PKD2 genes, mutations in which cause cyst formation in PKD.

Renal Function: The ability of the kidneys to filter waste products and maintain fluid and electrolyte balance in the body.

Tolvaptan: A medication that slows the growth of kidney cysts and preserves kidney function in individuals with ADPKD.

Ultrasound: An imaging technique that uses sound waves to create pictures of the inside of the body, commonly used to detect kidney cysts in PKD.

Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs): Infections of the urinary system, which are common in individuals with PKD due to cysts and other complications.

Vasopressin: A hormone that regulates water balance in the body, targeted by the drug tolvaptan to reduce cyst growth in PKD.

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