

Health Disparities in the Medicare Population

Chronic Kidney Disease



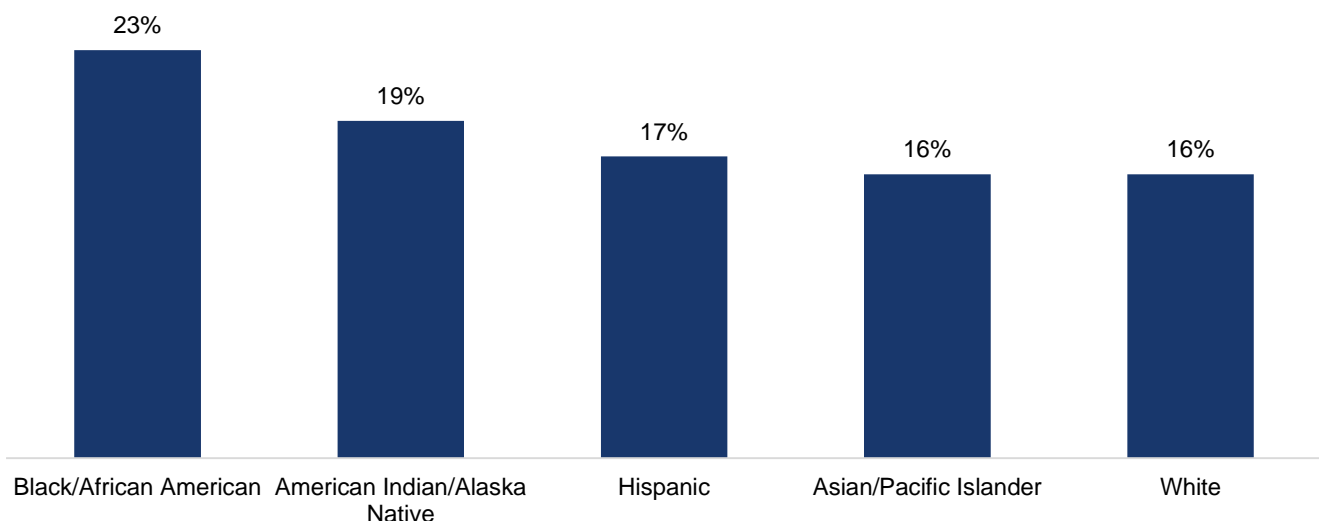
The two main causes of chronic kidney disease (CKD) are diabetes and hypertension. As a consequence of CKD, the kidneys do not function properly resulting in increased levels of waste in the blood. CKD can lead to kidney failure making a transplant or dialysis necessary. In the early stages of CKD, people may be asymptomatic so screening is very important. Early detection and patient education can help prevent kidney failure as there are actions that can be taken to prevent further damage and slow disease progression. According to the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), CKD is the ninth leading cause of death in the United States.¹

In 2014, 17% of Medicare Fee-For-Service (FFS) beneficiaries had a diagnosis of CKD.² The figure below shows the prevalence of CKD among Medicare FFS beneficiaries by race and ethnicity. CKD is highest among Black/African American beneficiaries (23%), followed by American Indian/Alaska Native (19%), and Hispanic (17%). Both Asian/Pacific Islander (16%) and White (16%) beneficiaries had the lowest percentages of CKD. The National Kidney Foundation states that Black/African Americans are three times more likely to experience kidney failure than other racial and ethnic groups.³

[Healthy People 2020](#) provides national objectives for improving the health of all Americans, including 14 objectives on CKD. Also, [Your Guide to Medicare's Preventive Services](#) describes kidney disease and diabetes-related preventive services and screening tests that help Medicare beneficiaries stay healthy. [Medicare Coverage of Kidney Dialysis & Kidney Transplant Services](#) explains what Medicare covers and how Medicare helps pay for kidney dialysis and kidney transplant services.

Prevalence of Chronic Kidney Disease among Medicare Beneficiaries by Race/Ethnicity, 2014³



Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Chronic Condition Data Warehouse (CCW)

Note: Population is limited to Medicare Fee-For-Service beneficiaries. RTI Race Code used for analysis. Racial categories of White, Black/African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Asian/Pacific Islander are classified as non-Hispanic. Hispanic ethnicity includes all race categories.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/kidney-disease.htm>
2. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Chronic Conditions. <http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/Chronic-Conditions/index.html>
3. National Kidney Foundation. <https://www.kidney.org>