



Improving Kidney Health Equity for Veterans

The lab at Jesse Brown VA Medical Center will change the way it calculates the bloodwork that tells you how well your kidneys are working (also known as eGFR).

What is an eGFR?

Your eGFR tells your doctor how well your kidneys are working and will show if you have kidney disease. If your eGFR is low, then your kidneys are not working as well as they should. It is important to detect kidney disease early so that your doctor can help care for you and protect your kidneys from further damage.

Your creatinine level (a routine blood test), age, and gender are used to determine eGFR. Until now, race was also used. Using race in this calculation is wrong because it comes from weak science.

Why is the VA making this change?

The VA is working to remove racism in medicine for all Veterans and providing equal kidney care.

When will the change occur?

Starting November 22nd 2021.

Will my kidney lab results change?

Your kidney lab results might be different, but this new number is more accurate. It reflects the true health of your kidneys. Please speak with your doctor if you have any concerns about your kidney health at your next visit.

Why is kidney health important?

Your kidneys are important because they filter chemicals in your blood, balance fluid levels in your body, help control your blood pressure, produce important hormones, and help keep your bones healthy.

What causes kidney disease?

The two most common causes of kidney disease are diabetes and hypertension. There are other causes of kidney disease that your doctor may discuss with you if you are affected.

How do you help your kidneys?

Kidney disease can be silent. It is important to work with your doctor to control your blood pressure, your blood sugar, eat a healthy diet, and quit smoking. At your next visit, your doctor can help you with a plan to keep your kidneys healthy.



What do you need to do?

- You do not need to do anything.
- You do not need to schedule special appointments. You should follow up at your planned visit.
- Your labs will be reviewed at future doctor visits.