Top 5 Kidney Disease Myths Debunked Transcript

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Introduction to Kidney Disease Myths

If I told you that some of the most common advice about kidney health is actually wrong and might even be holding you back from healing, would you believe me?

Because here's the truth. There are myths about kidney disease floating around that I hear from patients almost every single day. And some of these myths aren't just harmless misconceptions.

They're actually preventing people from getting the care they need or understanding what's really happening in their bodies. This is Doctor Talks. So today, I'm breaking down the top five kidney disease myths that need to go away right now.

These are beliefs that show up in doctors' offices, on internet forums, even in bill-meaning advice from friends and family. And I'm going to tell you why they are wrong and what you should know instead.

Normal Labs Don't Always Mean Healthy Kidneys

Let's start with perhaps the most dangerous myth of all. If my labs look normal, my kidneys are fine. I cannot tell you how many times someone comes to see me and says, well my doctor said everything looks good, but they're exhausted, they have brain fog, blood pressure is creeping up, and they just don't feel right.

And when I look at their labs, yes technically everything falls within the normal range, but here's what most people don't understand. Normal doesn't mean optimal.

Standard lab ranges are based on population averages, not what's ideal for your health. Your creatinine might be 1.2, which is normal, but if it was 0.8 last year, that's actually a significant change that deserves attention.

Your ETFR might be 65, which doesn't raise red flags in conventional medicine, but that means you've already lost about 35% of your kidney function. By the time standard labs show obvious kidney disease, you're often years into the problem.

This is why functional medicine looks at trends, optimal ranges and the whole picture, not just whether you are inside or outside a reference range. Your body is trying to tell you something long before the labs scream it.

Listen to those whispers. Now let's tackle myth number two. Kidney disease only happens to older people or people with diabetes or hypertension. This one frustrates me because it creates this false sense of security.

Yes, diabetes, blood pressure, aging are major risk factors, but kidney disease doesn't discriminate. I work with people in their 20s and 30s who have kidney dysfunction.

Kidney Disease Isn't Just for Older Adults

Young, otherwise healthy individuals who are dealing with autoimmune conditions, undiagnosed infections, toxic exposures or genetic factors they didn't even know about.

The reality is that kidney disease is showing up younger and younger and it's often tied to modern lifestyle factors, chronic inflammation from processed foods, environmental toxins we are exposed to daily, chronic stress that never leaves us, gut health issues that create systemic problems.

These aren't just old person problems. These are human problems in our current environment. So if you are thinking, I'm too young to worry about my kidneys, I need you to reconsider.

Prevention and early intervention work best when you start early, not after damage has already occurred. Myth number three is, I constantly see patients say that I need to drink eight glasses of water a day for kidney health.

Look, hydration is important, but this 8 glasses rule is completely arbitrary and not based on solid science. In fact, some people with kidney disease drinking too much water can actually be problematic.

If your kidneys aren't filtering efficiently, overloading them with excess fluid can lead to swelling, electrolyte imbalance, and added strain. The truth is, your hydration needs are individual.

They depend on your activity level, your climate, your kidney function, your medications and so many other factors. Some people need more water, some need less.

The best indicator? Your thirst, the color of your urine and how you feel.

Hydration Myths and Water Quality

If you're forcing down water when you're not thirsty, you're not doing yourself any favors. And here's something most people don't know. The quality of your water matters just as much as the quantity.

If you're drinking tap water loaded with fluoride, chlorine and other contaminants, you might actually be adding to your toxic burden. Filtered water is a much better choice for kidney health.

This brings me to my myth number four, and this one gets people really worked up. Protein is bad for your kidneys. I get it. For decades, people with kidney disease have been told to drastically reduce protein.

And yes, in advanced kidney disease, protein restriction can help reduce waste products that the kidneys struggle to clear. But the blanket statement that protein is bad is oversimplified and often harmful.

First of all, not all protein is created equal. High-quality plant-based proteins are very different from processed meats loaded with preservatives and inflammatory compounds.

Your body needs protein to repair tissue, maintain muscle mass, support immune function, and countless other vital processes. Cutting protein too drastically can lead to malnutrition, muscle wasting, and a weakened immune system, especially in older adults.

The real question isn't should I eat protein, it's what kind of protein, how much and in what context. Someone with stage 2 kidney disease has very different needs than someone on dialysis.

Someone eating a whole foods, plant-rich diet has different inflammatory markers than someone eating fast food every day.

Protein Myths and Personalized Nutrition

This is exactly why personalized assessment is so critical. What you need is based on your labs, your stage of kidney disease, your overall health status, and your body's specific requirements.

5. The one that breaks my heart, because it rubs people of hope. If you have kidney disease, you're eventually going to end up on dialysis. No. Just no.

This fatalistic view is not only wrong, it's damaging. Your kidney disease can progress to kidney failure if left unmanaged. But progression is not inevitable.

I have worked with countless people who have stabilised their kidney function, improved their numbers and avoided dialysis altogether by addressing root causes.

This is where functional medicine shines, where we identify and address the underlying issues, whether it's chronic inflammation, gut dysbiosis, toxin exposure, autoimmune triggers, or metabolic dysfunction.

The body has a remarkable capacity to heal. I'm not saying everyone will reverse their kidney disease completely, but improvement is absolutely possible for many people.

I think about someone I worked with a few years ago, a woman in her early 50s with an EGFR of 28. She'd been told to prepare for dialysis within the year.

We did comprehensive testing and found massive inflammation driven by hidden infections and severe gut issues and created a targeted protocol. 18 months later, her EGFR was 42 and she felt better than she had in decade.

She's still dialysis free today. Now, does that happen for everyone? No. Every person is different. But the idea that kidney disease is one-way street?

That's simply not true. And believing it can actually prevent you from seeking out the interventions that could help? So here's what I want you to take away from today.

Kidney Disease Is Not Always a One-Way Street

Question what you have been told. Not in a way that makes you distrust medicine, but in a way that empowers you to dig deeper. Normal labs don't always mean you're fine.

Kidney disease isn't just for older people or diabetics. hydration isn't one size fit all, protein isn't the enemy, and kidney disease doesn't have to be a downward spiral.

Your kidneys are resilient, complex organs that respond to how you treat your body as a whole. And when you address the root causes, not just the symptoms, healing becomes possible.

If you're dealing with kidney concerns and want a personalized approach that looks at your unique root causes, we offer consultations at the Holistic Kidney Institute.

We don't just manage decline, we work to understand what's driving your kidney dysfunction and create a targeted plan to address it. Visit DrBisma.com to learn more.

Remember, your health is not predetermined. You have more control than you have been told. Thank you for tuning in to Doctor Talks. We hope today's episode has enlightened and inspired you on your path to optimal health.

Key Takeaways and Closing Remarks

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