

A microscopic view of red blood cells, showing their characteristic biconcave disc shape and reddish color. The cells are scattered across the frame, with some in sharp focus and others blurred in the background, creating a sense of depth. The lighting is warm, highlighting the texture of the cells.

Anemia in Patients with Kidney Disease

Diagnosis

Your physician can diagnose anemia by a combination of a blood test, physical exam and understanding of medical history. While anemia is confirmed by a blood test (to measure your hemoglobin count and iron levels) your physician will also need to know any symptoms you have experienced and your history to make a diagnosis.

Treatment

Treatment options for anemia vary greatly based on the patient and situation. Below are a few of the common treatments. Before beginning any treatment, ensure your provider is well versed in recent publications as research about anemia treatment is changing treatment recommendations.

- **Iron:** iron can be prescribed as a pill or given as an IV. Raising iron levels can help raise hemoglobin levels to combat anemia.
- **EPO:** Patients can be given doses of EPO to help trigger your body to produce more red blood cells. EPO can be given as an injection or, for patients on dialysis, it can also be administered during dialysis.
- **B12 and Folic Acid supplements:** These are available over the counter and may be recommended to some patients to help with anemia.
- **Red Blood Cell Transfusion:** If a patient's hemoglobin levels fall too low, a physician may prescribe a red blood cell transfusion to help increase the amount of oxygen being delivered to organs and tissues.

Patients with anemia need to work closely with their physician and care team to manage their Anemia.

Sources:

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/kidney-disease/chronic-kidney-disease-ckd/anemia>

https://www.kidney.org/atoz/content/what_anemia_ckd

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