NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TARGETS HIGH POTASSIUM THREAT TO KIDNEY PATIENTS

PATIENTS KICK OFF 4TH ANNUAL “ARE YOU O-K+?” CAMPAIGN FOR HIGH POTASSIUM AWARENESS DAY ON MAY 1

Washington, D.C. – The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP), the oldest and largest fully-independent kidney patient consumer organization in the USA, continues to put a national spotlight on the devastating impacts of high potassium (hyperkalemia) on individuals with advanced chronic kidney disease (CKD) on National High Potassium Awareness Day, May 1, 2023. Over three million U.S. adults have experienced hyperkalemia, and among those, over 48 percent had chronic kidney disease (CKD) and/or heart failure. AAKP will conduct its annual “Are You O-K+” campaign through AAKP’s Center for Patient Education and Research for the fourth year. The campaign utilizes AAKP’s sophisticated global and nation social media platforms to reach millions of Americans who are at risk for hyperkalemia.

In 2019, AAKP launched the Decade of the Kidney™ to organize greater awareness of kidney-related issues and the overwhelming need for transformative innovations in kidney drugs, diagnostics, and devices to prevent and treat the advancement of kidney diseases and potential kidney failure. The “Are You O-K+” effort is a central element of that initiative and engages kidney patients, care partners, allied medical professional associations, and the larger kidney community. AAKP advocates for streamlined clinical trials, greater involvement of patients and their unique patient insight data, real-world evidence, and patient-reported outcome data in the approval and launch of safe, new kidney innovations. For 2023, AAKP is working to remove burdensome and unnecessary barriers to patient consumer access to safe, U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved kidney therapies and devices, erected by insurers, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicare Services (CMS).
AAKP will be hosting a **FREE virtual educational “Are You O-K+” webinar on Monday, May 1, 2023, from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. ET.** Register at [www.areyouok.org](http://www.areyouok.org) or [click here](http://www.areyouok.org). The webinar will include educational presentations, kidney-friendly cooking tips, patient stories about the impact and importance of potassium management, and much more. The virtual event will be available OnDemand after May 1 for enduring education.

The **“Are You O-K+”** campaign utilizes the scientific symbol of potassium “K+” with a popular message, “Are You Ok,” to encourage individuals with kidney diseases to know their potassium level. The safe range for blood potassium level is under 5.1 (3.5 - 5.0 mEq/L). Levels of 5.1 and higher may indicate hyperkalemia, making May 1 (5.1) the key time for this annual awareness day. Educational resources about high potassium and kidney disease are available in English and Spanish at [www.areyouok.org](http://www.areyouok.org).

“Since 2020, AAKP has been educating millions of people about the risks of hyperkalemia and the availability of innovative treatments to prevent the most devastating impact of this condition. For 2023, AAKP continues to vigorously expand our reach and educational resources so kidney patients, their medical teams, and our allies across the kidney community can support this national grassroots movement to continue to mark May 1 (5.1) as National High Potassium Awareness Day,” Edward V. Hickey, III, USMC, AAKP President, said. “We are honored to initiate and continue to lead this awareness day campaign for the last four years, and we appreciate our ongoing educational partnership with campaign supporters AstraZeneca and CSL Vifor.

“AstraZeneca is proud to continue our partnership with the AAKP on the 4th annual National High Potassium Awareness Day. As a company dedicated to improving the lives of people living with and at risk of developing chronic kidney disease, we believe it’s imperative for patients to feel empowered and make informed decisions about managing their potassium levels, which can be life-threatening if left untreated,” said Katherine Keller, Executive Director, Marketing, AstraZeneca.

For more information on the **“Are You O-K+”** campaign and the available educational resources, visit [www.areyouok.org](http://www.areyouok.org). Get involved on social media and help spread the word by downloading the [campaign toolkit](http://www.areyouok.org) and following us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/areyouok5point1), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/areyouok5point1), and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/areyouok5point1). For more information about AAKP’s educational and advocacy programs, visit [www.aakp.org](http://www.aakp.org) or join today as a FREE member at [www.aakp.org/join](http://www.aakp.org/join).

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Since 1969, AAKP has been a patient-led organization driving policy discussions on kidney patient consumer care choice and treatment innovation. By 1973, AAKP patients had
collaborated with the U.S. Congress and White House to begin American dialysis coverage for any person suffering kidney failure, a taxpayer effort that has saved over one million lives. In 2018, AAKP established the largest U.S. kidney voter registration program, KidneyVoters™. Over the past decade, AAKP patients have helped gain lifetime transplant drug coverage for kidney transplant recipients (2020); new patient-centered policies via the White House Executive Order on Advancing American Kidney Health (2019); new job protections for living organ donors from the U.S. Department of Labor (2018); and Congressional legislation allowing HIV-positive organ transplants for HIV-positive patients (2013). Follow AAKP on social media at @kidneypatient on Facebook and @kidneypatients on Twitter, and visit www.aakp.org for more information.