

# Race & Kidney Function Measurement



In 2021, a task force that studied the use of race in eGFR announced a new race-free calculation.<sup>1</sup>

## How Is Kidney Function Measured?<sup>1</sup>

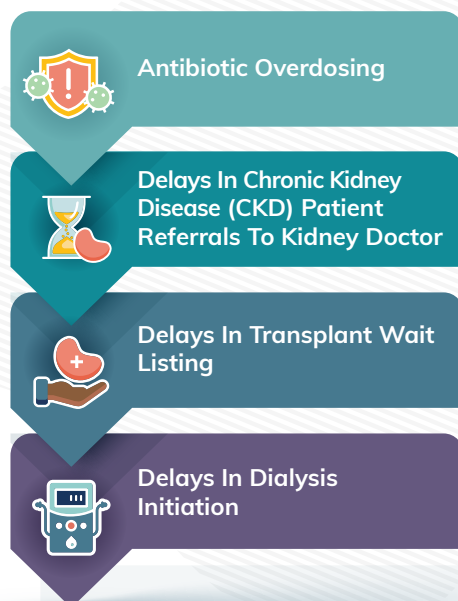
- ▶ Your doctor may order kidney testing for you. One of the best kidney function tests is **glomerular filtration rate (GFR)**. It measures how well your kidneys are working.
- ▶ This blood test is usually sent to a medical lab where the amount of creatinine (a waste product) is measured. The report includes an **estimated GFR (eGFR)**.<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ **Creatinine** levels can differ between people. These levels can be affected by age, sex, and body weight. Historically, this has included a factor of race.

## Why Was Race Included In Former eGFR Calculations?<sup>1</sup>








When doctors developed calculations to estimate kidney function, studies had shown that people who **self-identified as Black or African American** averaged slightly higher levels of creatinine in their blood. This was believed to be due to differences in muscle mass, diet, and kidney function.<sup>1</sup>

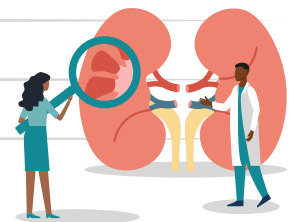
## Potential Clinical Consequences Of The Use Of Race In eGFR Equations<sup>2</sup>

Using race as a factor can result in higher eGFR for Black individuals and cause these clinical consequences:

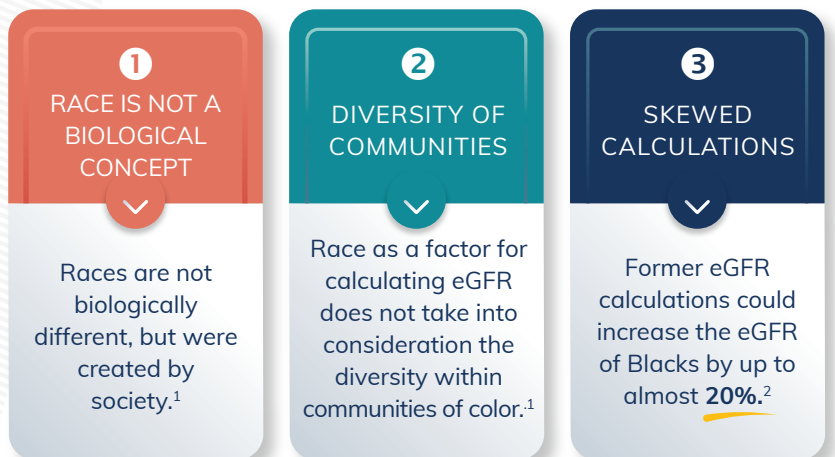


## How is eGFR Used?<sup>1</sup>

-  Checking kidney function before a **living kidney donor** gives a kidney
-  Ensuring patients receive the proper **medicine dosage**
-  Enrolling individuals in **clinical trials**
-  Testing kidney function before **imaging tests** that include dye
-  Determining a **referral to a kidney doctor**
-  Planning for needed **dialysis**
-  Evaluating for a **kidney transplant**



## Why Was Race Removed From eGFR Equations Recently?



### Learn More: [OPEN Kidney Disease](#)

Explore the latest kidney health information and educational resources developed in partnership with experts at NephU.

#### References

1. Understanding African American and non-African American eGFR Laboratory results. National Kidney Foundation. <https://www.kidney.org/atoz/content/race-and-egfr-what-controversy> Accessed June 2023.
2. Eneanya N, et al. JAMA. 2019; 322(2): 113-114.