



Health Awareness

Take It From Alonzo Mourning: Check Up On Your Kidneys

(NAPSA)—It's National Kidney Month and basketball star Alonzo Mourning is taking the opportunity to spread the word about a condition he has a personal connection to—chronic kidney disease.

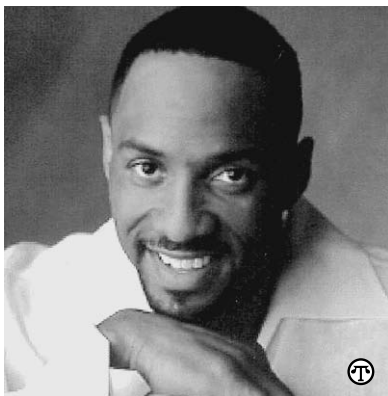
Chronic kidney disease is a condition where the kidneys do not function effectively and are unable to stimulate the bone marrow to produce enough red blood cells, help control blood pressure or rid the body of waste. More than 20 million Americans—or one in nine adults—are estimated to have chronic kidney disease and another 20 million are at increased risk.

In 2000, Mourning was named National Basketball Association (NBA) Defensive Player of the Year and an Olympic gold medalist. That same year, Mourning began feeling unusually tired. His physician diagnosed this as a symptom of anemia caused by chronic kidney disease. By 2003, Mourning needed a kidney transplant.

Today, Mourning has returned to the NBA and is leading Rebound from Anemia, a program sponsored by Ortho Biotech Products, L.P. to help those at risk for chronic kidney disease recognize early symptoms.

"Before my diagnosis, I didn't know I was at risk for kidney disease or that anemia is a warning sign," said Mourning. "If I had known more about symptoms, I could have worked with my doctor and received treatment earlier, which may have slowed my disease progression."

People at risk for chronic kidney disease include those with diabetes, high blood pressure or family history of kidney disease. It is more common among African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asians, Pacific Islanders, American Indians and those over the age of 65.



Basketball star Alonzo Mourning is spreading the word about chronic kidney disease.

Results from 37,000 individuals participating in the National Kidney Foundation's (NKF) Kidney Early Evaluation Program (KEEP) screenings showed that half of the participants—most of whom had risk factors—had chronic kidney disease, but only 2 percent were aware of it.

According to Dr. Allan Collins, president-elect of the NKF, "Ninety percent of the KEEP participants reported visiting their doctors in the last year, yet most were unaware they were at risk for chronic kidney disease."

If you have risk factors for chronic kidney disease, it's particularly important to recognize signs and symptoms of the condition, such as anemia. Symptoms of anemia may include tiredness and reduced ability to carry out routine tasks.

To learn more about chronic kidney disease and anemia, visit KidneyResource.com. Information about Rebound from Anemia is available at ReboundfromAnemia.com. Information about Alonzo Mourning's *Zo's Fund For Life* is available at ZosFundForLife.org.