**Fighting chronic kidney disease disparities with genetic know-how**

**CARLOS T. CARTER**

Kidney specialists increasingly understand the importance of integrating genetics into care for patients at risk for kidney disease. This makes sense, since genetics is one of the leading causes of kidney disease, and everyone’s genome is different. 

Dr. Empey explains, “Black people have higher rates of kidney disease and diabetes than white people. 

It’s not just the genetics of diabetes and heart disease that increase their risk.”

He continues, “This is why we have to move away from a one-size-fits-all approach to care. 

Not only do Black people have higher rates of diabetes and high blood pressure, they also experience higher rates of other kidney disease risk factors, such as hypertension, obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure.”

In addition, the person’s family and genetics play a key role in increasing their risk. “Genetic testing is a way we can uncover known risk factors, such as hypertension and high blood pressure,” says Dr. Empey.

“For example, if a patient has a family history of diabetes or hypertension, we can use genetic testing to evaluate their risk for these conditions.”

“By using genetic testing, we can identify patients who are at higher risk for kidney disease and diabetes, and tailor their care to prevent or delay the progression of these diseases.”

In conclusion, Dr. Empey stresses the importance of genetic testing in improving care for Black patients with kidney disease.

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