



1725 I Street NW • Suite 510 • Washington, DC 20006  
Tel 202-659-0599 • Fax 202-659-0709 • [www.asn-online.org](http://www.asn-online.org)

**Contact:** Shari Leventhal, 202-416-0658, [sleventhal@asn-online.org](mailto:sleventhal@asn-online.org)

## **KIDNEY GROUPS RALLY FOR WORLD KIDNEY DAY**

*ASN members and kidney disease patients advocate for sustained research funding, programs that improve patient care*

**Washington, DC (Monday, March 9, 2009)** — The American Society of Nephrology (ASN), in partnership with the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) and Dialysis Patient Citizens (DPC), celebrates World Kidney Day on Thursday, March 12, 2009. Physicians and patient advocates from across the nation will meet with members of Congress to raise awareness about kidney disease and its growing impact on people's health.

Approximately 26 million adult Americans show evidence of chronic kidney disease (CKD) and may develop kidney failure—end stage renal disease (ESRD). Another 20 million are at risk for developing CKD. Most people lose more than half of their kidney function before realizing they have a problem.

In America, 505,000 adults with ESRD require ongoing, expensive, and life-altering treatments —frequent dialysis treatments or kidney transplantation—to stay alive. The annual cost of treating ESRD is more than \$32 billion.

ASN, NKF, DPC, and the Kidney Care Partners will hold a World Kidney Day Congressional Reception on Wednesday, March 11, with special guests Vince Curatola from HBO's acclaimed series *The Sopranos* and Reed Doughty of the Washington Redskins. Mr. Curatola and Mr. Doughty have experienced the devastating impact kidney disease can have on patients and their families. Mr. Curatola's father suffered from the disease, while Mr. Doughty's infant son received a kidney transplant from his mother after he was diagnosed with CKD.

On World Kidney Day, members of ASN (kidney scientists and physicians) will urge their congressional representatives to join ASN in its support of robust, sustained research that addresses the link between CKD and its known causes as well as the factors that propel many with CKD into kidney failure. Sustained research funding via the National Institutes of Health and other federal

The American Society of Nephrology®, ASN®, Renal Week®, CJASN®, JASN®, and NephSAP® are registered trademarks of the American Society of Nephrology.

research agencies will help translate laboratory findings into treatments that prevent the long-term negative effects of CKD, ESRD, and other kidney diseases. When visiting with congressional representatives and staff, ASN members will also discuss funding and administrative needs for essential programs that improve patient care and lessen the financial burden on kidney disease patients.

World Kidney Day, observed yearly on the second Thursday of March worldwide, raises global awareness about kidney disease. Members of the renal community are encouraged to advocate for early detection and prevention of kidney disease and promote the innovative research undertaken at institutions worldwide that offer hope for patients suffering from the disease.

On Capitol Hill, ASN advocates will also urge members of Congress to expand Medicare coverage of medications needed to reduce the likelihood of organ rejection among transplant recipients, and recognize that disparities in access as well as how treatment is provided are a significant problem in the US that should be addressed in health care reform legislation.

Founded in 1966, the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) is the world's largest professional society devoted to the study of kidney disease. Comprised of 11,000 physicians and scientists, ASN continues to promote expert patient care, advance medical research, and educate the renal community. ASN also informs policymakers about issues of importance to kidney doctors and their patients. ASN funds research, and through its world-renowned meetings and first-class publications, disseminates information and educational tools that empower physicians.

###