### INTRODUCTION

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is defined according to the presence or absence of kidney damage and level of kidney function—irrespective of the type of kidney disease (diagnosis). Among individuals with chronic kidney disease, the stages are defined based on the level of kidney function. Identifying the presence and stage of chronic kidney disease in an individual is not a substitute for accurate assessment of the cause of kidney disease, extent of kidney damage, level of kidney function, co-morbid conditions, complications of decreased kidney function, or risks for loss of kidney function or cardiovascular disease in that patient. Defining stages of chronic kidney disease requires “categorization” of continuous measures of kidney function, and the “cut-off levels” between stages are inherently arbitrary. Nonetheless, staging of chronic kidney disease will facilitate application of clinical practice guidelines, clinical performance measures, and quality improvement efforts to the evaluation, and management of chronic kidney disease.

### RESOURCE