

Diabetes and kidney disease

Information Prescription

Your last two blood test results (eGFR) are: / / / /

Your last two urine test results (ACR) are: / / / /

About a third of people with diabetes develop kidney problems. Your urine and blood tests have shown that you have kidney disease, which puts you at higher risk of health complications.

Talk with your doctor, or diabetes health care team about ways you can reduce your risk.

What do my kidneys do?



Your kidneys are filters that remove waste from your body into your urine and keep the things you need, like proteins.

What happens when your kidneys are damaged?

Over time, high blood glucose (sugar) levels can damage the small blood vessels in the kidneys and stop the filters working properly. The first sign of damage is protein leaking into your urine. If spotted early, it can be repaired, so have the tests to check your kidneys at your annual diabetes check-up.

The two tests that check how well your kidneys work are:

- a blood test for eGFR (how well your kidneys are filtering)
- a urine test for ACR (how much protein is leaking).

With more advanced kidney disease, you may feel unwell, tired or nauseous and your hands and feet may look swollen. Over time your kidneys can fail, meaning you need dialysis or a kidney transplant.

How can I keep my kidneys healthy?

You can do some important things to slow the damage to your kidneys.

Blood pressure

Having high blood pressure causes further kidney damage and increases your risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

- Aim to keep your blood pressure within your target range. The target is usually less than 140/90. You may need medication to help keep it in your target range.

Lifestyle

Stop smoking: For help quitting, ask about your local quit smoking service or call the Quitline on **137848**.

- Avoid adding salt to food and choose low-salt options.

Medication

- Talk to your doctor or nurse practitioner about prescribing you an ACE inhibitor or an ARB (these are medications) to help protect your kidneys. Your diabetes medications might need changing. Ask for a review of your other medicines, as some of these are harmful if you have kidney damage.

HbA1c

- High blood glucose levels increase the chance of kidney damage. Discuss appropriate blood glucose targets with your health care team.

Cholesterol

- Lowering cholesterol is important. Eat less fatty food and processed meats, avoid creamy and deep-fried foods and choose low-fat dairy. Ask your doctor if you need a medicine to lower your cholesterol. More help: Ask about other services available to you, or go to kidney.org.au.

Kidney disease safety alert

- If you have dehydration, vomiting or diarrhoea, seek medical advice straight away, as some of your medication may need to be stopped urgently.
- Some over-the-counter medicines will no longer be safe for you, so always tell the pharmacist you have kidney disease.

My next steps

Discuss with your diabetes health care team two actions you are going to focus on (think about what, where, when and how):

1 _____

2 _____

Name: _____ Health professional: _____ Review date: _____

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