

Diabetes – Keeping your kidneys healthy

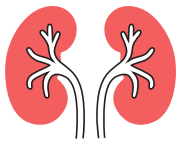
Information Prescription

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

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

About a third of people with diabetes go on to develop kidney problems. Blood and urine tests can show early signs of any damage and help you keep your kidneys healthy.

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 are:

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

In the early stages of kidney disease, there may be no symptoms. With more advanced kidney disease, you may feel unwell, tired or nauseous, and your hands and feet may look swollen. Even without symptoms of kidney disease, having a reduced eGFR increases your risk of having a heart attack or stroke. Having high blood pressure makes things worse, as it contributes to both cardiovascular disease and further kidney damage.

How can I keep my kidneys healthy?

In the next column are some important things that you can do to keep your kidneys healthy.

- Blood pressure.** 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.
- HbA1c.** High blood glucose levels increase the risk of kidney damage. Discuss with your health care team an appropriate target.
- Stop smoking.** For help quitting, ask about your local quit smoking service or call the Quitline on **137848**.
- Cholesterol.** Lowering bad cholesterol is important to keep you healthy. You may need a tablet called a statin.

Eat a healthy balanced diet

- Eat a variety of vegetables and fruit. Aim for five serves of vegetables and two serves of fruit every day.
- Reduce salt: eat less fast food, choose low-salt options, and avoid adding salt at the table.
- Aim for at least two to three serves of oily fish a week.
- Eat less fatty food, processed meats, full-fat dairy, creamy sauce, deep fried foods and pastries.
- If you drink, cut down on alcohol.
- Stay hydrated – water is best.

Get more active

- Aim for 30 minutes physical activity most days of the week to raise your heartbeat. Activities like walking fast and cycling all count. Add some activity that strengthens your muscles, like gardening or yoga, twice a week.

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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