



INFORMATION PRESCRIPTION

Diabetes and your kidneys

Your last two blood test results (eGFR):

Date:

Date:

Your last two urine test results (ACR):

Date:

Date:

About one in three Australians living with diabetes will go on to develop kidney problems. Blood and urine tests can find early signs of damage and help keep your kidneys healthy.

What do my kidneys do?

Your kidneys filter waste and keep the things your body needs, like proteins. The filtered waste is removed from your body through your urine.

How do kidneys get 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. The damage can be treated if found early.

The two tests that check your kidneys are:

- a **blood** test to see how well your kidneys are filtering (called an estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR))
- a **urine** test to see how much protein is in your urine (called an albumin-creatinine ratio (ACR) test).

In the early stages of kidney disease, you may have no symptoms. However, a reduced eGFR can increase your risk of heart attack or stroke. Having high blood pressure adds to this increased risk and can cause further kidney damage.

With more advanced kidney disease, you may feel unwell, tired, or nauseous, and your hands and feet may look swollen.

How can I keep my kidneys healthy?

Below are some important things you can do to help keep your kidneys healthy.

Blood pressure. Aim to keep your blood pressure within your target range - you may need medication to do this.

Your target range is:

HbA1c. High blood glucose levels increase the risk of kidney damage. Aim to keep your HbA1c within your target range.

Your target range is:

Stop smoking. For help quitting, ask about your local quit smoking service or call the Quitline on **13 7848**.

Cholesterol. Lowering bad cholesterol is important to keep you healthy. You may need a tablet called a statin.

How can I keep my kidneys healthy?

Eat a healthy balanced diet

Eat a variety of different coloured vegetables and fruit. Aim for five serves of vegetables and two serves of fruit every day.

Reduce salt intake by eating less fast food, choosing low-salt options and avoiding adding salt.

Limit fatty food, processed meats, full-fat dairy, creamy sauce, deep-fried foods, and pastries.

Limit how much alcohol you drink.

Stay hydrated - water is best.

Depending on your level of kidney function, your nutrition needs may change. Talk to your doctor about a referral to a dietitian who can help you.

Be active

Aim for 30 minutes of physical activity at least five days a week. Physical activity should raise your heartbeat, such as brisk walking, cycling, or swimming. Also include muscle-strengthening activities twice a week, such as lifting weights, yoga, and gardening.

My next steps

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

1 _____

2 _____

Name: _____

Health professional: _____

Review date: _____

The NDSS and you

Whether you have just been diagnosed with diabetes, or have been living with diabetes for a while, the NDSS provides a range of support services, information, and subsidised products to help you manage your diabetes, stay healthy and live well. For access to more resources (including translated versions), or to find out more about support services, go to **ndss.com.au** or call the NDSS Helpline on **1800 637 700**.

This information is intended as a guide only. It should not replace individual medical advice and if you have any concerns about your health or further questions, you should contact your health professional.