

Diabetic Kidney Disease

Work with your health care professional to help protect your kidneys.

If you have diabetes, you are more likely to develop kidney disease. After 20 years of diabetes, many people with diabetes have at least some kidney damage. In fact, up to 40 percent develop kidney disease. The following are things you can do to help protect your kidneys.

Take Care of Your Kidneys

Call your doctor if you have symptoms of a bladder or kidney infection, such as burning during urination, passing urine more often than usual, cloudy or bloody urine, or back pain. It's important to treat these infections right away.

Have your blood pressure checked often. High blood pressure (also called hypertension) is very dangerous for your kidneys — it speeds up kidney damage. If you have high blood pressure, find out what you can do to lower it.

If you have been diagnosed with high blood pressure, you will probably need to take prescribed medication. It is very important to ALWAYS take medication prescribed by your doctor even when you feel well. If you are overweight, your doctor may also recommend that you lose weight.

Controlling your blood sugar can help prevent kidney disease. Try to keep your blood sugar level close to normal. Your doctor can tell you what “normal” means for you.

Limit the amount of protein in your diet — too much protein can be bad for your kidneys. Protein is found in foods such as chicken, cheese, meat, and beans. Work with your doctor, nurse, and dietitian to plan the best diet for you.

Be prepared to provide urine and blood samples at office visits. Urine and blood tests can show how your kidneys are doing and can detect damage before you notice any symptoms.

Seek Treatment

Early kidney damage can be treated with diet and medication. It's very important to continue controlling your blood pressure and blood sugar.

If kidney damage continues to worsen, you will be referred to a kidney specialist (nephrologist). Kidney failure can be treated with dialysis or kidney transplantation. Your doctors will discuss your treatment options with you.



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