

Your kidneys and diabetes

How will I know if I have kidney disease?

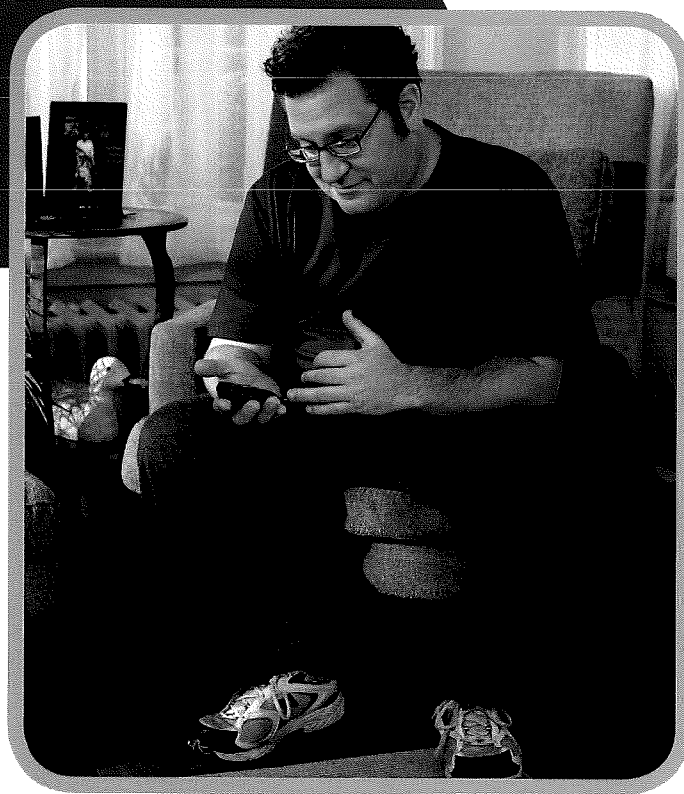
You may not know if you have kidney disease. In the early stages, kidney disease causes no symptoms.

Why is kidney disease dangerous?

Having kidney disease increases the chance that you will get heart disease. If kidney disease is not treated, your kidneys will get worse until they are able to do very little. This is called kidney failure, or end-stage renal disease, and causes death.

There is no cure for kidney disease, but the earlier you find and treat kidney disease, the better your chances are of preventing kidney failure. That's why it's so important to visit your health care provider regularly to control your diabetes.

Diabetes is the main cause of kidney disease and kidney failure. Controlling your blood sugar level and blood pressure can help prevent or delay kidney disease.



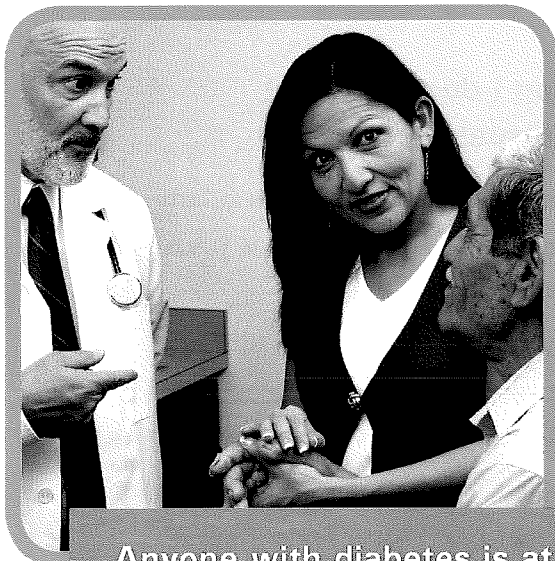
What can I do to prevent kidney disease?

- Visit your health care provider regularly
 - Get screened for kidney disease to catch problems early
- Follow your health care team's advice
 - Sometimes, exercise, changes to your diet, and medicine can help keep your kidneys healthy
- Talk to your health care provider about ways to
 - Keep your blood sugar under control
 - Keep your blood pressure low (high blood pressure can lead to kidney disease or make it worse)
 - Lose weight if you are overweight
 - Avoid drinking alcohol and smoking
 - Be active every day (talk to your health care provider before starting any physical activity)

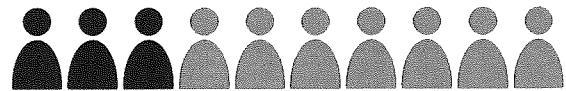
What do my kidneys do?

You need food and drink—and maybe medicine—every day to stay healthy. These create waste in your body. That's where your kidneys come in. Your kidneys

- Remove waste from your blood and make urine to remove waste from your body
- Balance the amount of water and minerals in your body to help control your blood pressure
- Signal your bone marrow to make new red blood cells to carry oxygen and nutrients to every part of your body



Anyone with diabetes is at risk of kidney disease, but if you are Hispanic, African American, or Native American, your risk is much higher.



Up to 30% of people with diabetes will get kidney disease.

What does kidney disease do to the kidneys?

Your kidneys contain millions of filters that remove waste and leave red blood cells and protein in the blood, where they belong. High blood sugar can damage these filters.

When kidney disease starts, you may be losing too much protein in your urine. You cannot see or feel this, but your health care provider can test your urine for it. Without treatment, your kidneys get worse. This is called diabetic nephropathy (nef-ROP-uh-thee). Once this happens, you are likely to get high blood pressure. If you already have high blood pressure, it may get worse. That's because it's harder for your kidneys to control your body's fluid levels.

Talk to your health care provider

Together with your health care provider you can work out a plan to keep your kidneys healthy and prevent kidney disease. Be sure to talk about any questions or concerns you may have.

