

Chronic Kidney Disease

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is a condition in which the kidneys are damaged and cannot filter blood as well as they should. Because of this, excess fluid and waste from blood remain in the body and may cause other health problems, such as heart disease and stroke.

Symptoms

People with CKD may not feel ill or notice any symptoms. The only way to find out for sure if you have CKD is through specific blood and urine tests. These tests include measurement of both the creatinine level in the blood and protein in the urine.

Quick Facts: CKD Snapshot

- Kidney diseases are the ninth leading cause of death in the United States.
- Early CKD has no signs or symptoms.
- Specific blood and urine tests are needed to check for CKD.
- CKD tends to get worse over time.
- CKD can be treated (the earlier treatment starts the better).
- CKD can progress to kidney failure.

Friendly Tips

- Keep your blood pressure below 140/90 mm Hg (or the target your doctor establishes for you).
- If you have diabetes, stay in your target blood sugar range as much as possible.
- Get active—physical activity helps control blood pressure and blood sugar levels.
- Lose weight if you're overweight.
- Get tested for CKD regularly if you're at risk.
- If you have CKD, meet with a dietician to create a kidney-healthy eating plan. The plan may need to change as you get older or if your health status changes.
- Take medications as instructed and ask your doctor about blood pressure medicines called angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors and angiotensin II receptor blockers, which may protect your kidneys in addition to lowering blood pressure.
- If you smoke, quit. Smoking can worsen kidney disease and interfere with medication that lowers blood pressure.
- Include a kidney doctor (nephrologist) on your health care team.

