



## Diabetes and CKD

(Chronic Kidney Disease)

### If you have diabetes, you are at high risk for CKD (chronic kidney disease).

- Diabetes is the leading cause of CKD (chronic kidney disease).
- For **44%** of people on dialysis, the cause is diabetes.
- You can have diabetes for years and not know it, so kidney damage can start very early.
- Ask your doctor about screening tests so you can prevent or slow down kidney damage.

### How does diabetes cause CKD?

- Your kidneys are made up of tiny blood vessels that filter waste and extra water out of your blood in the form of urine.
- High blood sugar levels damage these blood vessels, causing your kidneys to stop working.
- If CKD gets worse and your kidneys fail, you will need dialysis or a kidney transplant to stay alive.

### How does your doctor test for kidney disease?

- **You should have these two tests once a year if you have diabetes.**
- **Urine test for albumin (protein).** For diabetics, this can be first sign of kidney damage.
- **Blood test for creatinine,** a waste product that is removed by healthy kidneys.
- Your creatinine number is used to calculate your **eGFR**, a measure of how well your kidneys are filtering and the stage of kidney disease.
- Finding CKD early is the key to saving your kidneys!

*Diabetes causes kidney disease.*

*Find and treat kidney disease early to stay healthy!*

## How to keep your kidneys healthy if you have diabetes—

- **Control blood sugar.** Your HgA1c should be less than 7. Follow your diabetes treatment plan.
- **Control blood pressure.** Aim for 130/80 or less. Diabetes and high blood pressure often go together. High blood pressure causes further kidney damage. Medication and cutting down on salt can help.
- **Take medications.** Special drugs called ACE inhibitors and ARBs can protect your kidneys
- **Exercise.** Helps with blood sugar and blood pressure. Just 30 minutes of brisk walking 5 days a week makes a huge difference!



- **Lose weight** if you need to.
- **Eat the right amount and the right kind of protein** to slow down kidney disease. Most Americans eat too much protein; a dietitian can help you.
- **Avoid over-the-counter pain medications called NSAIDs**, like ibuprofen, naproxen (brand names are Aleve, Advil, and others).
- **Get more diabetes education.** Medicare and many insurance plans cover diabetes education every year, so you can stay up to date.



## Questions for your doctor if you have diabetes:

- Do I have protein in my urine?
- What is my eGFR?
- What is my hemoglobin A1c?
- What should my blood sugar range be?
- How often should I check my blood sugar?
- What can I do to better control blood sugar?
- What is my blood pressure and how can I lower it?
- Should I be taking an ACE inhibitor or ARB medication?
- Should I see a dietitian or attend a diabetes education class?

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