

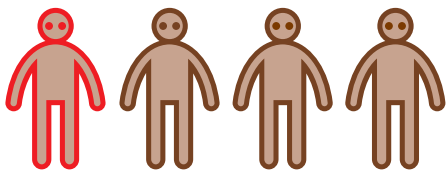
Fact sheet – Indigenous health

Kidney Disease and our mob

How do I keep healthy?

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How does kidney disease affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have a high rate of kidney disease. 1 in every 4 people will get kidney disease. Many will also have diabetes and high blood pressure.

- **Reason:** Being overweight because of an imbalance in physical activity and diet.
Action you can take: Eat less sugary foods, drink less sugary drinks and do more physical activity.
- **Reason:** High rate of diabetes due to high sugar intake. 7 out of 10 who start dialysis got sick kidneys from diabetes.
Action you can take: Drink water and avoid sugar.
- **Reason:** Bacterial infections caused by poor hygiene, resulting in itchy skin.
Action you can take: Shower daily, wash clothes.
- **Reason:** Family history
Action you can take: You cannot change your family history but you can look after your kidneys. Get your kidneys checked regularly.
- **Reason:** Substance misuse.
Action you can take: Avoid alcohol and illegal drugs.

Challenges

Rural and remote:

- Not many specialist doctors
- Having to move away from homelands for dialysis
- High rates of poor housing

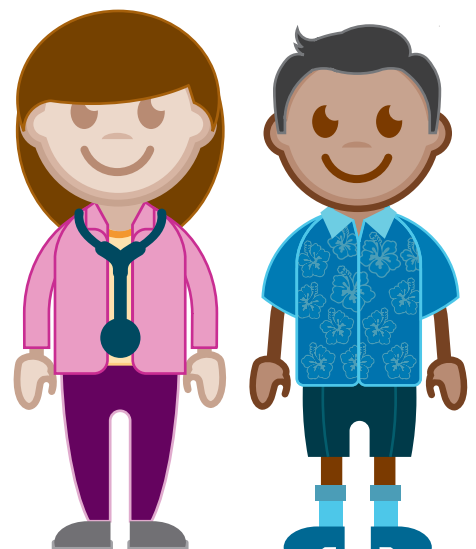
Coping with dialysis and treatment:

- It can be difficult to work and do dialysis
- Limited access to transport to get to treatment
- Not feeling well and busy dialysis routines means decreased participation in community and cultural activities

- Mental health stress issues because chronic disease can cause depression
- Fear of retribution if carer helping with home dialysis
- Low transplant rates from both family and deceased donors

Action you can take: Aboriginal liaison officers, social workers and other community supports may be available to help overcome some of these problems.

If you look after you kidneys, they'll look after you.



For more information about Kidney or Urinary health, please contact our free call Kidney Health Information Service (KHIS) on 1800 454 363.

Or visit our website kidney.org.au to access free health literature.

This is intended as a general introduction to this topic and is not meant to substitute for your doctor's or Health Professional's advice. All care is taken to ensure that the information is relevant to the reader and applicable to each state in Australia. It should be noted that Kidney Health Australia recognises that each person's experience is individual and that variations do occur in treatment and management due to personal circumstances, the health professional and the state one lives in. Should you require further information always consult your doctor or health professional.



If you have a **hearing or speech impairment**, contact the National Relay Service on **1800 555 677** or **relayservice.com.au**

For all types of services ask for 1800 454 363

Contact your doctor or Aboriginal Medical Service if you need more information.
