

Fact sheet – Indigenous health

Who needs a Kidney Health Check?

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Looking after our mob

Am I at risk? How do I know if I have kidney disease?

Being at risk means that you are doing something to damage your kidneys or that other health factors are putting you at risk.

Check below to see if you are at risk. The more times you say yes the bigger the risk.

If you say yes more than once you need a kidney health check.

Risk factors

Do you have diabetes? Yes or No



Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney disease in Australia. It is caused by problems with the production and/or

action of insulin, a hormone that controls the amount of sugar in your blood. With Type 1 diabetes, the pancreas does not make enough insulin. With Type 2 diabetes, the body cannot use insulin efficiently.

Is there a family history of kidney failure? Yes or No



Kidney disease may run in families and even if only one person in a family has kidney failure, all blood relatives

should be tested. Unsure? Ask family members about it.

Have you ever had a heart attack, a stroke, or been told you have heart failure? Yes or No



If you've ever had a heart attack, a stroke, or been told you have heart failure, then these conditions are referred

to as cardiovascular disease. A history of cardiovascular disease significantly increases your risk of developing kidney disease.

Do you have high blood pressure? Yes or No



Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the wall of the arteries as the heart pumps blood. If this

pressure rises and stays high over time, it can damage the body in many ways. High blood pressure affects the kidneys by putting more stress on the blood vessels throughout the body, including the kidney filters.

Do you smoke? Yes or No



People who smoke are three times more likely to have reduced kidney function than non-smokers. Smoking damages the kidneys by hardening the arteries.

Are you overweight or obese? Yes or No?



Being obese (fat) increases your risk of developing kidney diseases. The definition of obesity is having a

body mass index (BMI) greater than 30.

Unsure about your BMI? Ask your clinic to calculate it for you.

Are you over 30? Yes or No



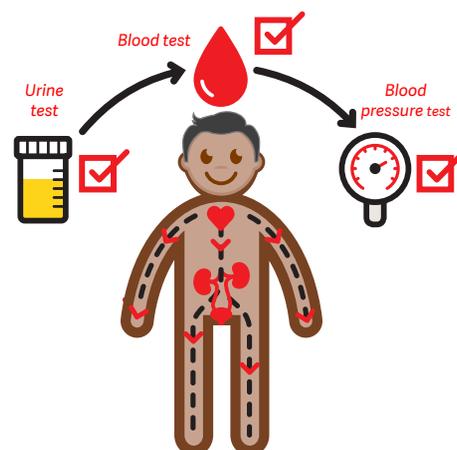
Your risk of getting kidney disease increases after the age of 30.

How do I check if I have kidney disease?

Get your urine, blood pressure and blood checked.

- **Why check blood pressure?**
Damaged kidneys make your blood pressure higher. High blood pressure causes more kidney damage.
- **Why check urine?**
When kidneys are damaged they let protein go into your urine. The amount of protein shows how quickly the kidneys are being damaged. Good blood pressure and blood sugar levels can slow the damage and reduce the amount of protein.

- **Why check the blood?**
When your kidneys are damaged the amount of rubbish and poison in your blood gets higher. The test is called an estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR). The lower the number the sicker the kidneys. Above 90 is normal. Below 10 means dialysis or transplant.

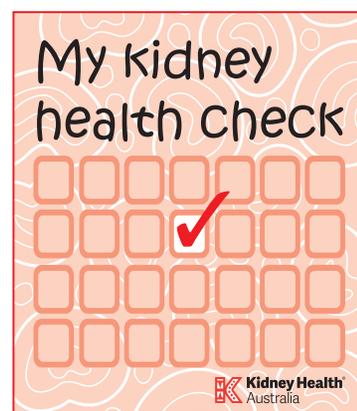


How regularly should I get a kidney health check?

A kidney health check should be done at least once a year if you have any of the risk factors.

If you have been told you already have chronic kidney disease you will need more regular checks to see if you need treatment for kidney damage.

It is important to remember that looking after your diabetes and your blood pressure will help to keep your kidneys healthy. It might stop you ever needing dialysis or a transplant.



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.