KIDNEY HEALTH DISCOVERY: THE KIDNEYS

A Tool for Indigenous Health Workers & Indigenous Communities
THE KIDNEYS

- Two kidneys
- Filter and clean blood
- Get rid of extra water and waste into urine
- If your kidneys stop working, you need treatment or you will die
LOCATION OF THE KIDNEYS:

- Most people have 2 kidneys
- Place your hands on your waist and your kidneys are where your thumbs are located.
- Each kidney weighs about 150 grams and is about the size of your fist

FUNCTIONS OF THE KIDNEYS:

- Remove wastes
- Remove extra water
- Balance your body salt and other chemistry
- Produce important hormones
  (For blood pressure control, bone strength, to create red blood cells)
- You have about 5 litres of blood in your body and your kidney filters it through approximately 400 times a day
WHY DO YOU GET KIDNEY DISEASE?

- Sugar diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Lots of infections over many years
- Obesity
Sugar diabetes is the most common cause of kidney disease

Things that can help reduce the risk of kidney disease are:

- Keep clean to reduce the risk of infection
- Eat good tucker with plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Don’t get fat
- Keep active
- Stop smoking
- Reduce alcohol intake
- Take your tablets as directed
BAD KIDNEYS - HOW DO YOU FEEL?

- Tired
- Swollen fingers, eyes, fat ankles, or swollen abdomen
- Hard to concentrate
- Short of breath
- Headache
- Not hungry
- Feel unwell
- Blurred vision
OTHER SIGNS INCLUDE:

- Blood in the urine
- Frothy urine (too much protein)
- Pain in the kidneys (could be from infection or stones in the kidney)
- Having to get up a lot to go to the toilet at night (kidney damage affects urine patterns)
- High blood pressure
MANAGING KIDNEY DISEASE

- The **BEST** management is to find it early and treat!
- You can lose 80-90% of kidney function without feeling sick, which is why you have to have regular checks.
HOW TO HELP SAVE YOUR KIDNEYS

- Take your tablets
- Control sugar levels
- Control high blood pressure
- See health worker regularly
- Skin sores, pneumonia or scabies need to be treated early
BLOOD PRESSURE LIMITS:

- Kidney failure affects cardiovascular health as well
- Normal: less than 130/80
- Borderline: between 130-140/ 80-90
- High: more than 140/90

If BP is higher than 180/110 you have very high BP

- Other factors to slow down the progression of kidney disease include:
  - Quit smoking
  - Keep active and don’t get fat
  - Drink water when thirsty (6-8 glasses a day)
  - Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables
  - Get blood pressure and urine checked regularly for signs of kidney disease
TREATMENT WHEN KIDNEYS FAIL

- You need to have treatment to remove waste and extra fluid from your body for the rest of your life.

- You can choose not to have treatment, but you will die.
Treatment is Dialysis or Transplant
TYPES OF TREATMENT TO CLEAN YOUR BLOOD OF WASTE PRODUCTS

- Kidney Machine (Haemodialysis)

- Bag Dialysis (Peritoneal Dialysis)

- Other options: Conservative Treatment (tablets & diet)

- Kidney Transplant
CONSERVATIVE TREATMENT:

- You do not have treatment for kidney failure, however without dialysis or a kidney transplant, you will eventually die.
- You may follow a special diet and take medications to help your kidneys work a little bit longer.
- People who may already have other serious and worsening health problems or elderly people who do not wish to undergo long term treatment may decide not to have treatment for their kidney failure.

KIDNEY TRANSPLANT:

- A healthy donated kidney is placed into the abdomen.
- Surgery is used and the new kidney helps get rid of the wastes that normally build up in between dialysis treatments.
- People who get a new kidney must have to be in very good health and must take tablets to make sure their new kidney works.
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- The machine needs electricity and water to make it work

- You need to have treatment at least 3 times a week for at least 4 - 5 hours each time

- You have a fluid and diet restriction when you are on the kidney machine

- Dialysis is only a poor substitute for healthy kidneys, which is why prevention of kidney disease is so important
For bag dialysis a small tube (catheter) is inserted into your abdomen.

This allows a fluid that cleans your blood to go in and out (4 times every day).
- The skin heals around the catheter after the operation and causes no pain

- There is a big danger of infection on the abdomen 'exit site' and at the end of the catheter if you are not clean

- It is very important to be very clean and have clean hands when you do bag dialysis
Kidney disease & Lifestyle

- Kidney disease means you will need to change your lifestyle.

- You need to work together with your Health Worker, Doctor and Nurse and this should keep you healthy.
POSSIBLE LIFESTYLE CHANGES ARE:

- Dietary and Fluid restrictions and having to take tablets
- Regular Treatment (3 times a week for Kidney machine and 4 times per day for bag dialysis)
- Decreased time/energy for socialising, family
- Decreased mobility and freedom due to treatment
- Changes in employment or financial security
- Changes in ability to have children

However, with help and following the advice of the health care team, these changes are manageable.
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A FISTULA—NEEDED TO HAVE HAEMODIALYSIS

To dialysis machine

An arteriovenous fistula

From dialysis machine

Fistula
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Fistula
HOW KIDNEY MACHINE DIALYSIS WORKS

Monitor

Controls
Water
Clean dialysate
Waste dialysate
to drain

Dialysis machine

Artery
Vein

Person receiving dialysis
HOW YOU FEEL WITH EXTRA FLUID

Tired and no energy

Short of breath

Blood Pressure
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Keep Kidneys Healthy

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