

# Who needs a Kidney Health Check?

## Am I at risk of kidney disease?

Being at risk of kidney disease means that parts of your lifestyle or health make you more likely to get sick kidneys.

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

**All First Nations people aged 18 years and older should get a Kidney Health Check.**

## Risk factors for kidney disease



### Do you have diabetes?

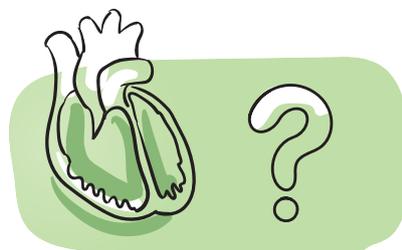
Diabetes is the main reason people end up with kidney disease. Problems with controlling the amount of sugar in your blood causes diabetes.



### Is there a family history of kidney failure?

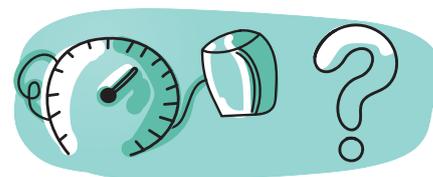
Kidney disease may run in families and even if only one person in your family has kidney disease, all

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



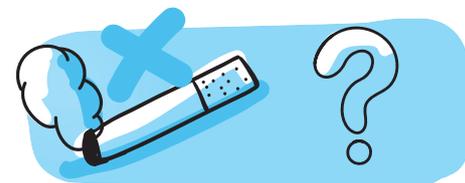
### Have you ever had a sick heart?

Having a sick heart can also be called cardiovascular or heart disease, heart attack, stroke, or heart failure. A history of a sick heart significantly increases your risk of developing kidney disease.



### Do you have high blood pressure?

If high blood pressure affects the kidneys, they may stop filtering extra water and waste from your blood properly.



### Do you smoke?

Smoking can make kidney damage worse, as it may slow down blood flow to the kidneys, narrow blood vessels and harden arteries in the kidneys.

## Who needs a Kidney Health Check?



### Are you socially disadvantaged?

The social, cultural, and political impacts of colonisation are associated with worse kidney health. For example, if you live in a regional or remote area, have insecure housing, restricted access to healthy or traditional foods or experienced a lower education or socioeconomic status.



### Were you born with a low birthweight (less than 2.5kgs)?

Low birthweight (less than 2.5kgs) and repeated childhood infections leading to kidney damage are risk factors for chronic kidney disease for First Nation Australians.



### Are you overweight or obese?

Being obese (fat) increases your risk of developing kidney disease. 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.



### Have you ever had a kidney injury or kidney infection?

Previous kidney infections or injuries mean the kidneys are more likely to become sick in the long term.



## Who needs a Kidney Health Check?

### What is a Kidney Health Check?

A Kidney Health Check is a simple way to check if your kidneys are sick. You can get this done at your local health centre.

#### A Kidney Health Check, includes:

- A urine (wee) test to check for kidney damage.
- A blood pressure check.
- A blood test to check your percentage of kidney function.



#### Urine test

##### Why check urine?

The amount of protein in your urine can indicate the rate of damage to your kidneys, as damaged kidneys allow protein to pass into the urine.



#### Blood pressure check

##### Why check blood pressure?

Damaged kidneys can increase your blood pressure.

High blood pressure can cause more kidney damage.

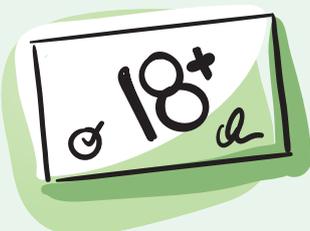


#### Blood test

##### Why check the blood?

The blood test checks how well your kidneys are working, it will tell you your percentage of kidney function which is called an estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR). The lower the eGFR, the sicker the kidneys. An eGFR above 90 is normal. An eGFR below 10 means you need dialysis or a kidney transplant to stay healthy.

### How often should I get a Kidney Health Check?



**A Kidney Health Check should be done at least once a year if you are over the age of 18 years or have any of the risk factors.**

The bulk billed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Assessment includes a kidney health check.

If you have been told that you 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 blood pressure will help to keep your kidneys healthy. It might stop you ever needing dialysis or a transplant.

## Who needs a Kidney Health Check?

### Things to Remember:

- A Kidney Health Check is a simple check that can be done at your local health centre.
- A Kidney Health Check includes a blood test, urine test and blood pressure check.
- All First Nations peoples aged 18 years and older or with risk factors for kidney disease should get a Kidney Health Check once a year.

### What does that word mean?

- **Blood pressure** – The pressure of the blood in the arteries as it is pumped around the body by the heart.
- **Body Mass Index (BMI)** – An approximate measure of your total body fat. It is worked out by dividing your weight in kilograms by your height in metres squared (m<sup>2</sup>).
- **Cardiovascular disease** – Includes all disease and condition of the heart and blood vessels, such as arteries and veins. The most common conditions include heart attack, heart failure, stroke, blockages in the blood vessels and vascular kidney disease.
- **Diabetes** – A chronic disease caused by problems with the production and/or action of insulin in the body which helps control blood sugar levels.
- **Dialysis** – A treatment for kidney failure that removes waste products and excess fluid from your blood by filtering your blood through a special membrane. There are two types of dialysis: haemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis.
- **Estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR)** – An estimation of glomerular filtration rate which is the best measure of kidney function and helps to determine the stage of kidney disease. It shows how well your kidneys are cleaning your blood.
- **Kidney transplant** – A treatment for kidney failure where a kidney is removed from the body of one person (the donor) and put into the body of the person with kidney failure.
- **Protein** – Substance obtained from food, which builds, repairs, and maintains body tissues. It also helps to fight infections and heal wounds.



#### For more information

To access more information about Kidney Disease, please scan the QR code.

Freecall 1800 454 363  
[kidney.org.au](http://kidney.org.au)



If you have a hearing or speech impairment, contact the National Relay Service on 1800 555 677 or [relayservice.com.au](http://relayservice.com.au). For all types of services ask for 1800 454 363.

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.