

Thousands of Aussies to don Red Socks in support of kidney disease

Inaugural Kidney Health Red Socks Appeal November 2020



During the month of November, Australians will be asked to pull on red socks and roam, run or ride 60kms to support people living with kidney disease.

Kidney disease is an insidious and deadly disease that affects 1.7 million Australians. Kidney Health Australia, the peak body for kidney disease, is launching the Kidney Health Red Socks Appeal on Monday, 2 November to galvanise more Australians into action to understand the impact of the disease on their lives and those close to them, and raise vital funds for early detection activities and support services to alleviate the impact and harm it causes.

Aussies are being asked to step out on their own or with friends and take on a 60km challenge during the month of November, in support of those living with the daily challenges of this debilitating and deadly disease.

Kidney Health Australia Chief Executive Officer, Chris Forbes said the idea behind the Red Socks Appeal was to recognize the countless hours that people of all ages with kidney failure spend hooked to a life-saving dialysis machine to help clean their body of toxins.

“A little-known fact about kidney disease is that people with kidney failure can spend 60 hours or more a month hooked to a dialysis machine to keep them alive,” Mr Forbes said.

“Dialysis machines basically clean the blood of toxins so it’s filtered out of the body and then returned, and this takes on average 5 hours at a time, three times a week,” says Mr Forbes. “This process plus the long hours in the chair can leave patients feeling fatigued and quite cold, so a blanket and a warm pair of socks is a must to get them through it.”

“We’d love people to put themselves in the ‘socks’ of someone living with kidney disease and take on a different type of challenge by either walking, running or riding 60kms to raise money for our courageous kidney community,” Mr Forbes said.

For those keen to take on a more extreme challenge, the Red Socks Appeal also offers a 150km challenge – the equivalent of 30 dialysis sessions a month – for those who’d like to show an even greater commitment to the cause.

Kidney Health Australia Chief Executive Officer, Chris Forbes says of the 1.7 million Australians affected by kidney disease, 1.5 million are unaware they are living with the early signs of the disease.

“The shocking fact about kidney disease is that a person can lose up to 90% of their kidney function before any symptoms are apparent,” Mr Forbes said.

“A person could be relatively fine one day and the next they could be in hospital facing a life sentence of continuous dialysis or on a transplant list, waiting for a suitable kidney donor.”

“We need to prevent people reaching this point so the Red Sock Appeal is also a great opportunity to raise more awareness around the impact this disease has on people’s lives and that of their families and drive early detection,” Mr Forbes said.

The industry organisation for the Australian Fitness Industry, Fitness Australia, is supporting the Kidney Health Red Socks Appeal and promoting the message around kidney disease and kidney health to its 26,000-strong membership.

“I’d like to thank Fitness Australia for lending their support to the Red Socks Appeal to encourage more Australians to get moving in November in support of kidney disease,” Mr Forbes said.

“It’s a fantastic way for us to spread the message around kidney health, promote the importance of exercise for health and wellbeing, and raise money to save and improve the lives of people affected by kidney disease.”

“In this age of COVID-19, we’ve made sure the event has something for everyone – if people can’t get out to **roam, run or ride** to raise money, they can still wear red socks and support us in their living rooms and on social media – this is a community event that everyone can get behind,” Mr Forbes said.

To find out more and register for the Kidney Health Red Socks Appeal, visit [kidney.org.au/redsocksappeal](https://www.kidney.org.au/redsocksappeal)

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Kidney Health Australia is a not-for-profit and the peak body for kidney health in Australia with the aim to protect 5 million at risk Australians from developing end stage kidney disease, and to save and improve the lives of people already affected by the disease through support services and funding crucial research. To find out more visit www.kidney.org.au

Kidney Health Facts

- Kidneys are essential to a person’s health and wellbeing. They rid your body of waste (through urine), clean your blood of waste and toxins, regulate your blood pressure and manage the production of Vitamin D – essential to strong bones, muscles and overall health!
- The biggest risk factors for kidney disease are diabetes, high blood pressure, established heart problems and/or stroke, family history of kidney failure, smoking, obesity, being 60 years or older, of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, or a history of acute kidney injury. To check your risk visit www.kidney.org.au/kidneyrisktest
- About 63 people die with kidney-related disease every day
- Kidney disease is a silent killer - sufferers can lose 90% of kidney function without experiencing any symptoms
- 1 in 3 people in Australia are at risk of developing chronic kidney disease

- A staggering 1.7 million Australian adults are affected by kidney disease while 1.5 million of those are unaware of it
- Kidney-related disease kills more people than breast cancer, prostate cancer and road accidents
- One in five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have indicators of chronic kidney disease and are almost four times more likely to die from it than the non-Indigenous population.