

# Asking for a Kidney Health Check

**Kidney disease or kidney damage is treatable if detected early by a Kidney Health Check. Its OK to ASK your Healthcare team for a Kidney Health Check at your next visit.**

You may be at risk of kidney disease and should have a Kidney Health Check if any of the below relate to you:



Diabetes



High blood pressure



First Nations Australian aged 18 and over



Current or past smoker/vaper



Very overweight or obese



Had a stroke, heart attack or have heart failure



Family history of kidney failure, dialysis, or kidney transplant



History of acute kidney injury



Non-Indigenous Australian aged 60 and over

## What is a Kidney Health Check?

A **Kidney Health Check** is quick and simple. You can have a Kidney Health Check at your local health centre, often as part of a regular check-up. It includes three parts:



A **blood pressure** check to see if you have high blood pressure. High blood pressure can damage your kidneys and kidney disease can cause your blood pressure to increase.

A **urine test** to see how much albumin (protein) is present in your urine. Albumin in your urine is a sign of damage or scarring in the kidneys. This test is called urine-albumin creatinine ratio (uACR).

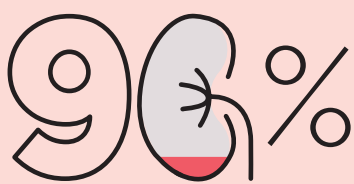
A **blood test** to check your kidney function. This test will measure how well your kidneys are filtering your blood and is called estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR).

There **isn't a cure** for kidney disease right now, but if it's found early and taken care of properly, you can slow down the damage to your kidneys by **up to half**.

## How do you know if you have kidney disease?

- Kidney disease is often called a 'silent disease' because most people don't feel sick until their kidneys are almost not working at all.
- The first signs of kidney failure can be very general and easy to miss.
- The only way to keep an eye on the health of your kidneys is to get a **Kidney Health Check**.

Less than **1 in 10** Australians are aware they are living with signs of kidney disease.



90% of kidney function can be lost without experiencing any symptoms

After having your **Kidney Health Check**, it is important to discuss the results with your GP.



**Kidney Health Australia** is Australia's voice for kidney disease. We fight for increased awareness and early detection, while providing resources and support to help people manage their kidney health.

If you are diagnosed with kidney disease and need support, please contact our free Kidney Helpline on **1800 454 363**.

Your GP can advise when you need to have your next **Kidney Health Check** based on your results.

### Questions to ask your doctor:

- What is kidney disease and do I need to be worried about my kidney health?

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- Do I need a **Kidney Health Check**?

☐ **YES**      ☐ **NO**

My reasons for getting a Kidney Health Check include:

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- What are the tests that I need to have and what is involved in the tests?

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- What will the result of a **Kidney Health Check** tell me? What is a normal result?

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- How often do I need a **Kidney Health Check**?

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- Following my **Kidney Health Check** – what are the next steps?

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- What could a kidney disease diagnosis mean for me?

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- Are there treatments for kidney disease?

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- Are there things I can do to help my kidney health?

Do I need to change my lifestyle? (e.g. diet, activity, weight, smoking)

☐ **YES**      ☐ **NO**

- Where can I get more information about kidney disease?

To ensure you get accurate and current information talk to your healthcare professional or you can connect with **Kidney Health Australia** for further information. Please contact our Helpline on **1800 454 363** or visit **kidney.org.au**.

### Tips to prepare for your doctor's visit

- Think about questions you want to ask your GP and write them down before your appointment.
- It may be hard to remember everything your GP tells you so write down the answers to your questions.
- Take a family member/friend along to the appointment to help you remember the information.





### Things to remember:

- ✓ Be prepared for your visit, make a list of questions, and consider taking a family member or friend with you.
- ✓ People with Type 2 diabetes or high blood pressure are at higher risk of kidney disease.
- ✓ **1 in 10** Australians have signs of CKD, but less than 10% of them are aware they have the condition. **90%** of kidney function can be lost before symptoms are apparent.
- ✓ To access more information and support visit **kidney.org.au**.

## What does that word mean?

### Albumin:creatinine ratio (ACR) –

A test used to see how much albumin leaks into your urine when your kidneys are damaged. A urine ACR is a part of a Kidney Health Check.

**Blood pressure** – The pressure of the blood in the arteries as it is pumped around the body by the heart.

### Chronic kidney disease (CKD) –

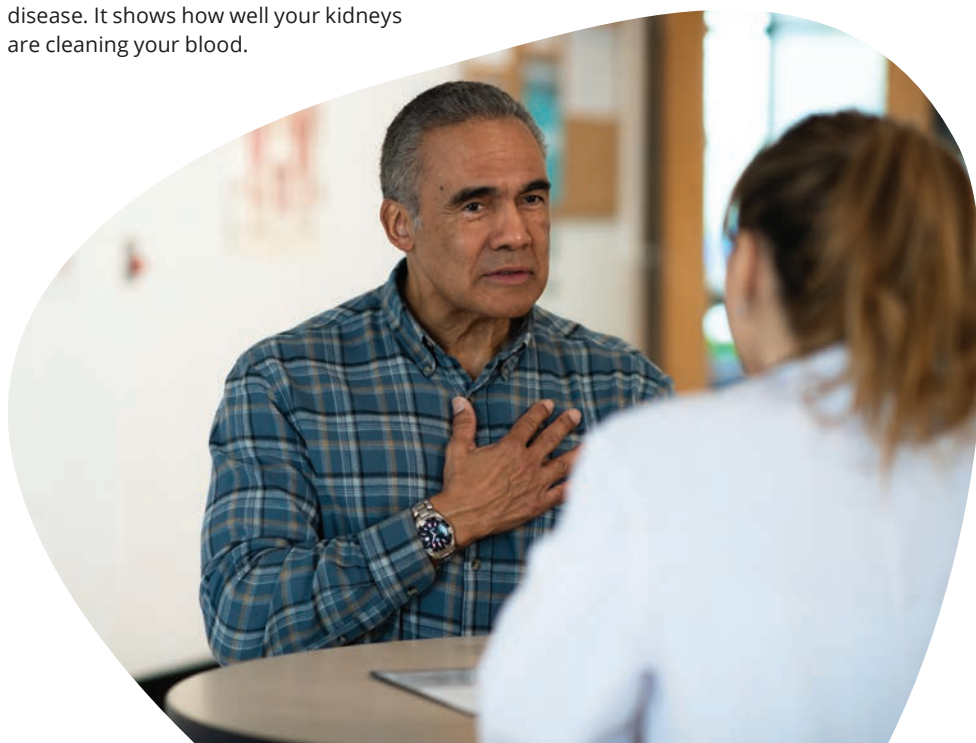
A term used widely to describe kidney damage or reduced kidney function (irrespective of the cause) that persists for more than three months. Sometimes CKD leads to kidney failure, which requires dialysis or a kidney transplant to keep you alive.

**Diabetes** – A chronic disease caused by problems with the production and/or action of insulin in the body which helps control blood sugar levels.

### Estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) –

An estimation of glomerular filtration rate (GFR). GFR 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.

**Urine** – The name for excess fluid and waste products that are removed from the body by the kidneys. Commonly called wee.



### For more information

To access information about CKD, or kidney health, please scan the QR code.

**Free Kidney Helpline 1800 454 363**  
**kidney.org.au**



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**.

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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.