



You've Been Diagnosed with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). Now What?



What to expect when you are diagnosed with CKD.

From understanding CKD and your diagnosis, to knowing what your provider will do next and learning what steps you can take.

What Your Doctor Will Do Next



Create a care plan: Your doctor will help you learn how CKD affects your health and what steps can stop further kidney damage.



Monitor your CKD: The same two tests used to find CKD are also used to track CKD:



Urine test known as “uACR”

- ▶ Urine Albumin-Creatinine Ratio
- ▶ Looks for protein in your urine to find kidney damage



Blood test known as “eGFR”

- ▶ Estimated Glomerular Filtration Rate
- ▶ Looks for waste in your blood to check the stage of CKD

Both tests are **done together** to get the whole picture of your kidney health, including your stage of CKD and how it is progressing.

Talk to your doctor about how often you should be tested to check your kidney health. Your doctor will compare your test results over time to check for worsened kidney damage and adjust your care plan.



Scan the code to view online and use the links.

What You Can Do Next

CKD can get worse over time and does not affect everyone at the same rate. Actively [managing CKD](#) can help you avoid other health problems, slow the progress of CKD and avoid kidney failure.



Early CKD, Stages 1–3: Care focuses on understanding the diagnosis, slowing progression and treating [complications](#). Here are steps you can take with help from your doctor:

- Understand how CKD affects other chronic conditions, such as diabetes, high blood pressure or heart disease.
- Stay active, avoid smoking and get enough sleep.
- Talk with a dietitian and eat kidney-friendly food.
- Keep your blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol levels healthy; diet and medicines may help.
- Work with your doctor to avoid prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines like aspirin and ibuprofen, which can hurt your kidneys.
- Find and treat complications of CKD, like heart disease, anemia and malnutrition.

Late CKD, Stages 4–5: The focus of care shifts to planning for kidney failure, requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant. CKD that is treated with dialysis or a kidney transplant is known as End Stage Kidney Disease (ESKD).

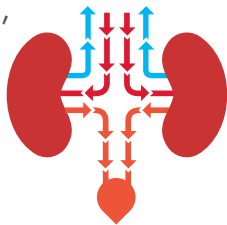
Here are steps you can take with help from your doctor:

- Plan to see a nephrologist (kidney doctor) for late CKD care and learn about treatments for kidney failure:
 - ▶ Kidney transplant (surgery to replace a damaged kidney with a healthy kidney).
 - ▶ Dialysis (replaces the filtering function of the kidneys).
 - ▶ Conservative management (addresses symptoms and complications).
- Understand your options for dialysis:
 - ▶ [Learn about different dialysis modes and settings.](#)
 - ▶ [Consult tools to help select an option.](#)
- Managing CKD and living with dialysis can be tough, and you might feel depressed. Your doctor can help you understand your emotions and learn about treatment options that can help. Here is more information to help you prep for a conversation with your doctor:
 - ▶ [Understand how CKD connects with your emotions.](#)
 - ▶ [Find ways to take care of your mental health.](#)

What are Kidneys?

Kidneys are your body's filters; they continuously filter blood to absorb protein and turn waste and extra fluid into urine.

Blood goes into the kidneys, where **waste and fluid** are filtered and sent to the bladder. Filtered **blood and protein** go back to the body.



What is CKD?

Over 37 million U.S. adults have CKD and 90% don't know it. CKD happens when your kidneys are damaged and can't properly filter blood. CKD gets worse over time. Only a small number of CKD cases lead to kidney failure, but CKD can also lead to heart disease and stroke. Finding and treating CKD early can prevent these complications and stop or slow further kidney damage.

What Are Symptoms of CKD?

Early CKD has no symptoms, but you might have these symptoms as your CKD progresses:

- ▶ Tiredness or loss of energy.
- ▶ Trouble concentrating or sleeping.
- ▶ Need to urinate more often.
- ▶ Blood in urine or foamy urine.
- ▶ Swollen feet and ankles or puffy eyes.
- ▶ Muscle cramps.
- ▶ Dry and itchy skin.
- ▶ Loss of appetite.

More Information

Click on the following links to learn more about your CKD diagnosis and management options:

- ▶ [About CKD](#) and [Guide to CKD](#).
 - ▶ [How to manage and live with CKD](#).
 - ▶ [Get support from other CKD patients](#).
 - ▶ [Connect with your CKD community](#).
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Understanding your CKD diagnosis can be overwhelming. These questions may help you get started with your doctor:

- ▶ What caused my CKD?
- ▶ How can I have CKD when I feel fine?
- ▶ What health problems can CKD cause?
- ▶ Is my CKD going to get worse?
- ▶ What can I do to stay as healthy as possible?
- ▶ What medications do I need to take and why?
- ▶ I feel anxious about having CKD, what should I do?
- ▶ How can I talk to other people who have CKD?

Information gathered from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Kidney Foundation (NKF), the Medical Education Institute (MEI) and the National Institute of Diabetes, Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK).

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