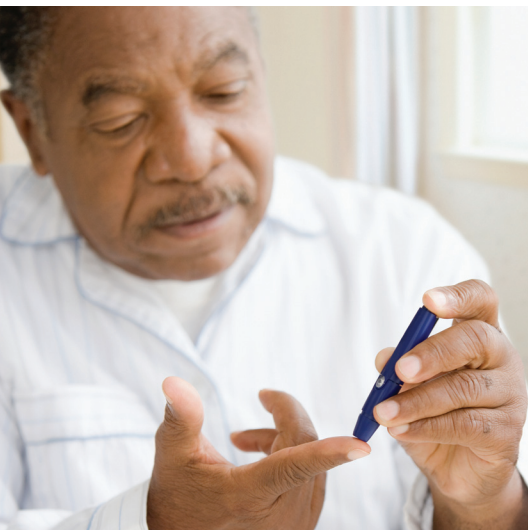


# For People with Diabetes or High Blood Pressure

## Get Checked for Kidney Disease

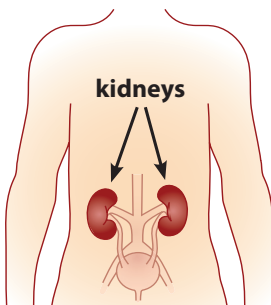


MAKE THE **Kidney.**  
Connection

## Why should I be checked for kidney disease?

Diabetes and high blood pressure can damage the kidneys and lead to kidney disease. You need to get checked for kidney disease if you have one of these conditions. Here are some other reasons to get checked:

- **Early kidney disease has no signs or symptoms.**  
The only way to know if you have kidney disease is to get checked for it.
- **Kidney disease usually does not go away.** It may get worse over time and can lead to kidney failure. If your kidneys fail, you may need to go on dialysis or have a kidney transplant to maintain health.
- **Kidney disease can be treated.** The sooner you know you have kidney disease, the sooner you can get treatment to help delay or prevent kidney failure. Treating kidney disease may also help prevent heart disease.



You have two kidneys located near the middle of your back, just under your rib cage. Their main job is to filter wastes and extra water from the blood to make urine. Wastes can build up in the body when the kidneys are damaged.

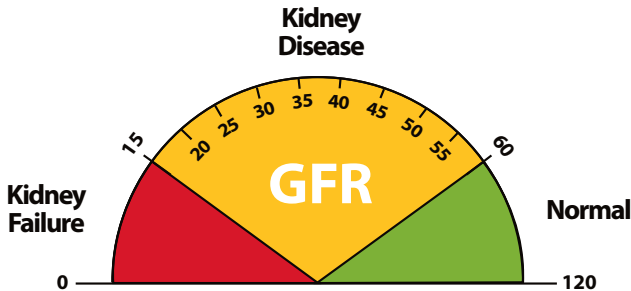
Diabetes and high blood pressure are not the only risk factors for kidney disease. You also should be checked if you have:

- cardiovascular (heart) disease, or
- a mother, father, sister, or brother with kidney failure.

### How will I be checked for kidney disease?

Two tests are used to check for kidney disease.

- A blood test checks your GFR, which tells how well your kidneys are filtering. GFR stands for glomerular (gloh-MAIR-yoo-lar) filtration rate. See picture below.

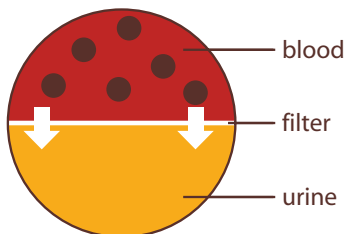


- A GFR of 60 or higher is in the normal range.
- A GFR below 60 may mean kidney disease.
- A GFR of 15 or lower may mean kidney failure.

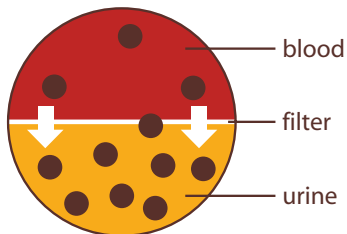
- A urine test checks for albumin in your urine.

Albumin is a protein that can pass into the urine when the kidneys are damaged. *See picture below.*

Inside a *healthy* kidney



Inside a *damaged* kidney



● albumin

## Steps you can take to keep your kidneys healthy

- Manage your diabetes and keep your blood pressure at the level set by your health care provider. That means eating healthy and cutting back on salt. It also means being active and taking medicines as prescribed.
- Get checked for kidney disease. The sooner you know you have kidney disease, the sooner it can be treated.

**At your next health care visit, make sure you learn:**

- Your blood pressure
- Your GFR
- The amount of albumin in your urine
- Your blood glucose



## For more information

### National Kidney Disease Education Program

[www.nkdep.nih.gov](http://www.nkdep.nih.gov)

1-866-4 KIDNEY (1-866-454-3639)



### Make the Kidney Connection

[www.facebook.com/makethekidneyconnection](http://www.facebook.com/makethekidneyconnection)

### National Kidney and Urologic Disease Information Clearinghouse

[www.kidney.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.kidney.niddk.nih.gov) • 1-800-891-5390

### National Diabetes Education Program

[www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov) • 1-888-693-NDEP (6337)

### The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Health Information Center

[www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov) • 1-301-592-8573

### Weight-control Information Network (WIN)

[www.win.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov) • 1-877-946-4627

Participants in clinical trials can play a more active role in their own health care, gain access to new research treatments before they are widely available, and help others by contributing to medical research. For more information, visit [www.clinicaltrials.gov](http://www.clinicaltrials.gov).



The National Kidney Disease Education Program (NKDEP) works to improve the understanding, detection, and management of kidney disease. NKDEP is a program of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

[www.nkdep.nih.gov](http://www.nkdep.nih.gov)

Revised May 2012 • NIH Publication No. 12-5867 • NIH...Turning Discovery Into Health