

WHAT HARMS THE KIDNEYS?

Very harmful to the kidneys are high blood sugar (diabetes) and high blood pressure. Obesity, smoking and long-term use of painkillers also stress the kidneys. Anyone on long-term medication may need to have their kidney function monitored.

If you are presenting one or more risk factors, consult your doctor for a kidney check.

Do you have any questions or would you like an examination?

Please contact your family doctor, specialist or a nearby hospital.

Stamp of the Institution



An initiative of ERA European Renal Association
c/o PKF Littlejohn, 15 Westferry Circus, Canary Wharf,
London E14 4HD, United Kingdom
info@strongkidneys.eu

In cooperation with



www.strongkidneys.eu



TAKE CARE OF YOUR KIDNEYS! SUPPORT THEM TO DO THE INCREDIBLE JOB THEY ARE DOING

DID YOU KNOW?

ONE IN TEN ADULTS WITHIN EUROPE HAVE REDUCED KIDNEY FUNCTION. BUT MANY ARE UNAWARE OF IT.

Kidney disease is initially often silent and by the time the first symptoms develop, it may already be at an advanced stage. The worst thing is that the loss of kidney function is irreversible, there is no cure.

That's why we want to put the kidneys in the spotlight with our Strong Kidneys campaign and raise awareness about these fabulous organs and their essential roles.

Support your kidneys to do the incredible job they are doing.

It is never too late to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

A balanced diet and regular exercise help to keep our kidneys healthy!

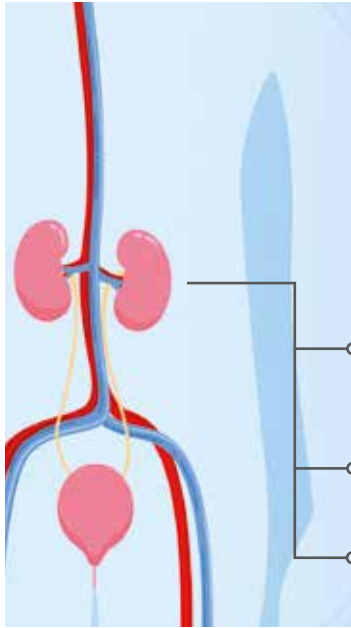
Especially high-risk patients with diabetes or hypertension should have an annual kidney test by their family doctor. The sooner a kidney disorder is detected, the better the chances of treatment.

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR KIDNEYS!

Prof. Dr. Christoph Wanner

President of the ERA (European Renal Association) /
Head of Nephrology at the University Hospital Würzburg, Germany





YOUR KIDNEYS

UNDERESTIMATED MULTITALENTS

The kidneys, paired bean-shaped organs, are situated just below the ribs. They may be small, but they perform several vital roles:

- The kidneys filter our blood and excrete the filtered waste products and toxins through urine. All of our blood passes about 300 times a day through our kidneys.
- They regulate blood pressure and maintain our body's water and mineral balance.
- They build essential hormones, regulate the production of red blood cells and keep our bones healthy.

WHAT IS CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE (CKD)?

In CKD, there is a gradual loss of kidney function. It develops slowly over time. There is no cure, but it is possible to slow the loss of function and minimise the associated risk for heart disease.

When CKD progresses and the kidneys fail, the accumulation of waste products in the blood is life-threatening. Dialysis or a kidney transplant is then needed.

If renal dysfunction is detected early, its progression can be slowed or even halted.

HOW DO I RECOGNISE CKD?

Your kidneys will suffer quietly at first. Before the first symptoms, irreversible damage has already been done. CKD affects our entire body! Signs can be: swelling of feet and legs, tiredness, shortness of breath, itchy skin, nausea, loss of appetite, muscle cramps, trouble concentrating, high blood pressure and heart problems.

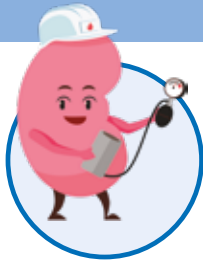
A simple blood and urine test provides information about your kidney health:

• **Blood test** – Creatinine is a waste product normally filtered and excreted by the kidneys. High levels of creatinine in your blood denote poor levels of kidney function. From the creatinine concentration, the glomerular filtration rate (GFR) is calculated. The GFR is an important marker to decide on diagnosis, prognosis and treatment.

• **Urine test** – If the filtering capacity of the kidneys is impaired, protein may no longer be retained in the body. If the protein Albumin is found in the urine, it indicates decreased kidney function.

CARE FOR YOUR KIDNEYS

After all, many risk factors lie in your own hands and you can do a lot yourself to keep your kidneys healthy:



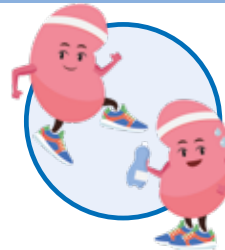
Watch your blood pressure

If you suffer from high blood pressure, check your lifestyle habits and talk to your family doctor.



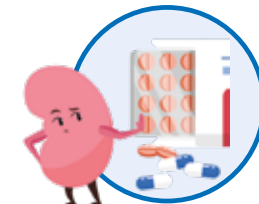
Avoid excess weight

Obesity increases the risk of many diseases and reduces life expectancy. Try to reach and maintain a healthy weight.



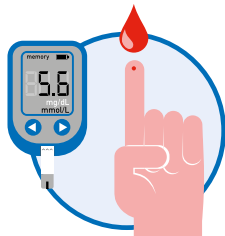
Stay active

The World Health Organization recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week, which corresponds to a daily 20-minute walk.



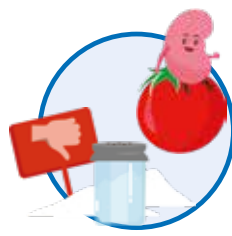
Be careful with medication use

Never take more than the recommended or prescribed dose of over-the-counter painkillers.



Watch your blood sugar

Diabetes mellitus is considered one of the main causes of CKD. Watch your diet and refrain from excessive sugar consumption (max. 25 grams/day).



Eat healthy

Fresh meals rich in vegetables, fruit, fish, and wholemeal products are highly recommended. Reduce your salt consumption, use spices instead.



Quit smoking

Nicotine increases blood pressure and damages the kidneys' filtering system.



Check your kidney health

Risk patients with diabetes, high blood pressure or overweight should have annual kidney check-ups. Even supposedly healthy people can benefit from a regular check-up.