

Keeping Your Kidneys Healthy

Your kidneys are about the size of your fist and are located near the middle of your back just below your rib cage. You can think of your kidneys like a coffee filter that are vital to removing waste products from your body. Your kidneys also help control your blood pressure, make red blood cells, and keep your bones healthy.

According to a University of California at San Francisco research study, nearly 15 percent of the U.S. population has chronic kidney disease due to an increase of high blood pressure and diabetes. Additionally, as you get older, your kidneys start to lose some kidney function and cause your kidneys to work harder.

Tips to Keeping Your Kidneys Healthy

- **Manage Your Diabetes.** Diabetes is a leading cause of kidney failure as it can create microvascular damage affecting the small blood vessels in organs like your eyes and kidneys.
- **Exercise.** Exercising just 30 minutes a day can improve your blood vessel health, which in turn boosts your kidney function.
- **Limit Your Alcohol Intake.** Limit yourself to no more than 2 drinks per day as too much alcohol can keep your kidneys from filtering your blood properly.
- **Consider Following the DASH Diet.** The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) is a diet that is recommended by the American Heart Association and the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute to help manage your high blood pressure. High blood pressure is another leading cause of kidney failure as it can damage the blood vessels in the kidneys and make them less effective at clearing out toxins.
- **Follow Instructions on Over-the Counter Medications.** When using nonprescription pain relievers, such as aspirin, ibuprofen, and acetaminophen, it is important to follow the instructions on the package. Too many pain relievers for an extended time could lead to kidney damage.



- **Don't Smoke.** Smoking can damage your kidneys and make existing kidney damage worse. If you're a smoker, talk to your doctor about strategies for quitting.
- **Discuss With Your Doctor if You Need to Keep Taking Proton Pump Inhibitors.** Proton pump inhibitors may cause gradual kidney damage that you may not fully recover from. A lot of people take proton pump inhibitors for heartburn and don't need to. Discuss with your doctor if you need to continue taking proton pump inhibitors and if the lowest dose is sufficient.

When to See A Doctor

Contact your physician if you have kidney risk factors such as:

- High blood pressure and diabetes
- A family history of kidney disease
- A past kidney injury
- You regularly take nonprescription pain relievers or proton pump inhibitors
- You are urinating more often, experiencing nausea and vomiting, confusion or trouble concentrating, swelling, muscle cramps, poor appetite or food tastes metallic and you experience extreme fatigue.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/chronic-kidney-disease/symptoms-causes/syc-20354521>

<https://parade.com/647687/lisamulcahy/11-things-you-didnt-know-about-your-kidneys/>

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/17689-kidney-failure>

https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;_