

A photograph of a man from the back, with his right hand covering his eyes. On his back, two white dashed outlines represent the location of kidneys. The text 'KIDNEY DISEASE' is overlaid in large red letters across the middle of the image.

# KIDNEY DISEASE

Are you at risk? Know the signs.

[kidneyhealth.ca](http://kidneyhealth.ca)

A message from the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, Manitoba Renal Program



### Why kidneys are important to your health:

Your kidneys are two fist-sized organs found below the ribs on both sides of the spine. Kidneys act like a filter or strainer. As blood flows through the kidneys, they remove wastes from the blood (breakdown of nutrients from food and body tissues). Kidneys also make hormones, balance important minerals for healthy bones, help to control blood pressure and control salt and water.

### What are the signs?

- Foaming, tea colored, bloody or cloudy urine
- Obvious changes in urinary frequency
- Swelling around the eyes, hands or feet
- Shortness of breath
- Less energy, feeling tired

**If your kidneys are damaged, you may not show any symptoms or feel any different. Kidney Disease is silent and often painless.**

**Kidney Disease may happen before you feel sick. Blood and Urine tests help to show if your kidneys are healthy.**



### What is Kidney Disease?

Kidney disease happens when there is damage to the kidneys. When this occurs, the kidneys do not work well. If you have kidney disease your doctor or nurse can explain how your condition affects you and what you can do. If your kidneys are not working properly the following may happen:

- Build up fluid and wastes
- Mineral imbalances
- Changes in hormone levels

In the early stages, you may feel well, but as the kidney disease develops, these problems can cause you to feel tired, weak, confused or short of breath. Parts of your body may swell up. Leading a healthy lifestyle keeps your body healthy, strong and reduces your chances of getting kidney disease.

### Are YOU at risk?

You should see your doctor or nurse for a urine and a blood test if you have any of the following:

- Diabetes
- High Blood Pressure
- Heart Disease
- Known Kidney Disorders or Disease
- Urinary Tract Disorders
- Auto Immune Disease (for example: lupus)
- Family History of Kidney Disease

**If you have these risk factors get tested today! Seeing your doctor or nurse regularly can prevent or slow down Kidney Disease!**

### What can I do to keep my kidneys healthy?

- If you have diabetes, make sure your doctor tests your urine regularly
- Know your blood pressure. Aim for a healthy blood pressure
- If you have a family member with kidney disease, make sure you get your blood pressure and kidneys tested regularly
- If you have a urine test, know the results
- Take your medications as prescribed
- Stop smoking
- Limit alcohol
- Eat healthy
- Aim for a healthy weight