

LEARN ABOUT HOW YOUR KIDNEYS WORK



This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, contact your health care provider or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.

What Are Kidneys?

Kidneys are small organs, roughly the size of an adult fist. They work continuously to maintain your overall health. Every 30 minutes, your kidneys filter all the blood in your body.

Key Functions of the Kidneys:

- Remove waste, toxins, and excess water from the body
- Help regulate blood pressure
- Support the production of red blood cells
- Maintain strong bones
- Balance essential chemicals in the blood

How Kidneys Clean Your Blood

- Blood enters the kidneys from your heart.
- Inside the kidneys, tiny filters remove waste and extra fluids from the blood.
- The filtered waste and excess water are transformed into urine.
- Urine travels through a small tube called the ureter to your bladder.
- The cleaned blood returns to the rest of your body.
- When your bladder is full, urine leaves your body through the urethra.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor

- Am I at risk for kidney disease?
- Should I be tested for chronic kidney disease (CKD)?
- What are my eGFR and uACR test results?
- Do I have diabetes or pre-diabetes?
- Is my A1C (blood sugar test) within a healthy range?
- Is my blood pressure at a healthy level?
- What steps can I take to protect my kidneys?
- How can I maintain healthy kidney function?
- What should I do if my kidneys are not working properly?
- How often should I have my kidneys checked?