

Why am I getting this leaflet?

This information sheet is being sent to you because your recent blood tests show that you have Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). "Chronic" means persistent or long term.

'Chronic' doesn't mean severe as some people think. In fact, most people with CKD will have a mild or moderate degree of CKD. This leaflet aims to explain more about this condition.

What do the kidneys do?

The job of healthy kidneys is to filter waste out of the blood, which it turns into urine, to remove it from the body.

What is CKD?

CKD is a condition where the kidneys don't work as well as usual.

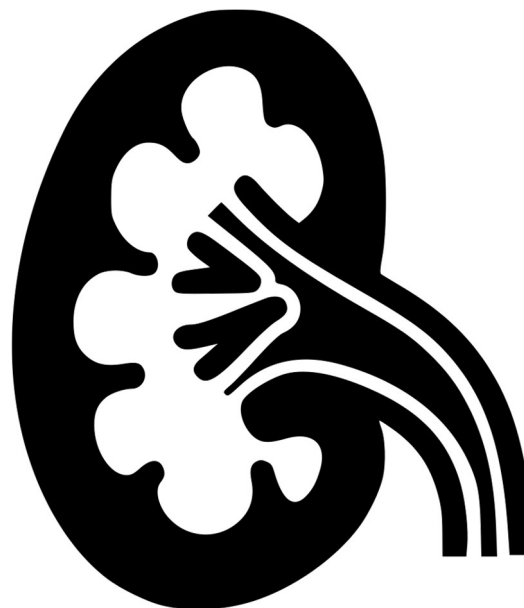
How common is CKD?

CKD is very common. About 1 in 10 people will have kidneys that show some sign of CKD. It is much more common in older people with approximately half of people aged 75 or over having some degree of CKD.

This is often thought of as part of the normal aging process rather than a true disease. For most, CKD tends to get worse very slowly, over a period of several years.

Why is it important to know I have CKD?

People with any degree of CKD have an increased risk of developing heart disease or stroke. This is why it's important to detect even mild CKD. Treatment may not only slow down the progression of CKD but also decrease the risk of developing heart disease or stroke.



What causes CKD?

For many people the cause is unknown. We do know that it is more common in those with diabetes, high blood pressure or heart problems.

It can also be caused less commonly due to an underlying issue with the kidneys

such as an inflammatory problem or a history of recurrent urine infections.

How is it diagnosed?

A blood test called the estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) is a measure of how well the kidneys are working.

There are 5 stages of CKD. Stages 1 and 2 are usually of no consequence. Stage 3 is moderate CKD which is by far the most common. Stages 4 and 5 are more severe.

For those with CKD 3 your GP will look after you and your future monitoring. For those with CKD 4 or 5 usually a kidney specialist will take the lead in your care.

What symptoms can I expect?

You are unlikely to feel unwell or have any noticeable symptoms with mild or moderate CKD (stage 1 to 3). Symptoms tend to develop when CKD becomes more severe (stages 4 and 5). These symptoms can vary widely but may include:

- Tiredness
- Itchy skin
- Muscle cramps
- Fluid retention (swelling of the feet, ankles, face or hands)
- Increased urinary frequency.

How can I help myself?

Living a healthy lifestyle is the most important thing you can do to decrease the risk of CKD worsening. This includes:

- Decreasing your salt intake
- Eating a healthy diet
- Taking regular exercise
- Losing weight if you are overweight
- Stop smoking

What happens now?

You are now on a register at the practice for those with CKD. This alerts our staff when your records are open to ensure we are prescribing appropriate treatments and so that your condition can be monitored appropriately.

You will be invited for an annual review usually around the month of your birth. This will involve having a blood test before you attend followed by a urine test, blood pressure check and weight check.

As long as everything remains stable then this will be all that is required. If there is any deterioration in your kidneys or any other concerns, the GP will discuss this with you.

Do I need any specific treatment?

Most people with mild to moderate CKD don't require any specific treatment. The aim is to relieve any symptoms that may occur and to reduce the risk of CKD worsening or developing any complications.

This includes ensuring good blood pressure control, good sugar control if you are diabetic and potentially some medications to reduce the risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Your GP will discuss treatments with you if they are necessary.

Other important things I need to know?

There are certain medications that are not recommended on a regular basis if you have CKD.

The main group of medications you need to avoid are Non-Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs), also known as anti-inflammatory medications. These include common drugs such as ibuprofen (nurofen, brufen, ibufen), diclofenac (voltarol) and naproxen. If you need to take any medications over the counter, or take any herbal supplements, please check with a pharmacist to ensure these are safe for you to take.

We hope this information has been useful. You can find more detailed information at: www.kidney.org.uk

If you have any questions please feel free to jot them down and discuss with your nurse or GP at your review.



Written by Dr R Greer
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Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)

A patient information leaflet

Patient name

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You have CKD stage

.....

Your eGFR is

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What you can do about this

- Read this leaflet
- Consider lifestyle changes