

What is it?

High blood sugar levels can damage your kidneys. Undiagnosed kidney damage can lead to serious health issues. You might develop kidney failure, which requires dialysis or a kidney transplant to keep you alive.

Kidney damage is often 'silent'. This means that you may not have any symptoms. That's why it's important to have a kidney check once a year. If kidney disease is found early, treatment can improve the life of your kidneys.

What will my GP do?

At your annual kidney check, your GP may:

- Do a kidney health check (usually blood and urine test)
- Check your blood pressure
- Check your blood sugar and cholesterol (blood test)
- Prescribe or adjust medication if necessary
- Refer you to a specialist if there is a serious problem with your kidney function.

Your GP may also review and recommend changes to your lifestyle, such as your diet and regular activity.

What can I do?

Keep your annual GP appointments, even if you feel well. Remember that you may not feel unwell even if there is some kidney damage. Other things you can do are to:

- Keep your blood glucose levels within the target range, as this helps protect your kidneys from damage caused by high glucose levels
- Stay active and exercise regularly
- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Drink plenty of water
- Lower your salt intake
- Stop smoking and phone 13 QUIT
- Ask your GP to check your blood pressure regularly.

What questions could I ask my doctor?

- What medicines should I avoid taking?*
- What can I do to look after my kidneys?*
- How often should I have my kidneys checked?*



What supports are available?

Your GP may refer you to one of the special diabetes services operated at:

- Bankstown Hospital: **9722 8360**
- Fairfield Hospital: **9616 8510**
- Liverpool Hospital: **8738 4577**
- Bowral and District Hospital: **4861 0303**
- Campbelltown Hospital: **4634 4028**

Where can I learn more?

- Diabetes NSW – look after your kidneys: dndss.com.au
- Diabetes NSW – diabetes and your kidneys: diabetesnsw.com.au
- Kidney Health Australia – diabetes and kidney disease: kidney.org.au