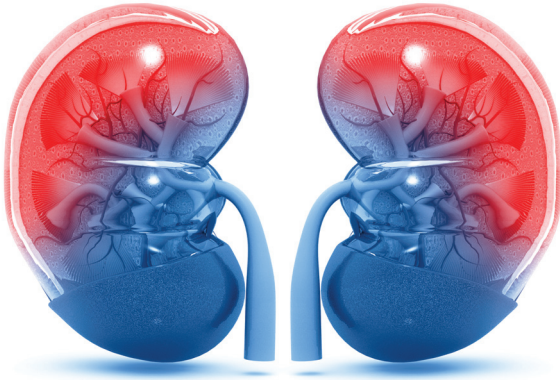


KIDNEYS



Kidneys are fist sized vital organs responsible for performing some of the most important functions in our body. They are sophisticated processing machines that keep our blood clean and chemically balanced.

Interesting facts about kidneys

- Your kidneys update your blood regularly. All the blood in your body goes through your kidneys and is filtered every 30 minutes, which is about 50 times every day.
- Our filtration system should thank these tiny filtering units called nephrons. They remove harmful toxins and excess fluids from the blood to keep you alive.
- Kidneys love their blood flow. They absorb and redistribute 99% of the blood volume throughout the body, leaving the 1% of the filtered blood to become urine.
- The right kidney is usually smaller and placed lower in the body than the left kidney. The right kidney sits under the liver, the body's largest internal organ, which explains why it's smaller and placed lower in the body.

Kidney Disease

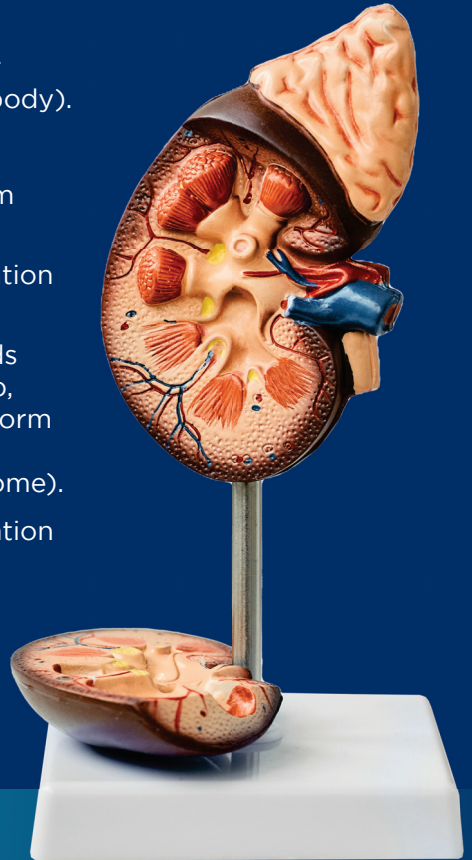
- Kidney disease is becoming a growing problem in developing countries, caused by the increased numbers of diabetics and hypertensives. Early kidney disease has minimal or no signs or symptoms. Kidney disease progression can be prevented and treated if detected early.

According to the latest guidelines received from the National Kidney Foundation:

- 10% of all people in the world have some form of kidney disease.
- Kidney failure in South African adults is mainly due to inherited hypertension (60–65%) or Type 2 diabetes (another 20–25%).

Signs and symptoms of chronic kidney disease include:

- Need to urinate frequently, especially at night.
- Swelling of the legs and puffiness around the eyes (fluid retention).
- High blood pressure.
- Fatigue and weakness (from anaemia or accumulation of waste products in the body).
- Loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting.
- Itching, easy bruising and pale skin (from anaemia).
- Shortness of breath from fluid accumulation in the lungs.
- Headache, numbness in the feet or hands (peripheral neuropathy), disturbed sleep, altered mental status (encephalopathy from the accumulation of waste products or uraemic toxins), and restless legs syndrome).
- Chest pain due to pericarditis (inflammation around the heart).
- Bleeding (due to poor blood clotting).
- Bone pain and fractures.
- Decreased sexual interest and erectile dysfunction.



Should you present with any of the above symptoms, talk to your Platinum Health Healthcare Provider for assistance.

Source: National Kidney Foundation
(nkf.org.za/all-about-the-kidneys)



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