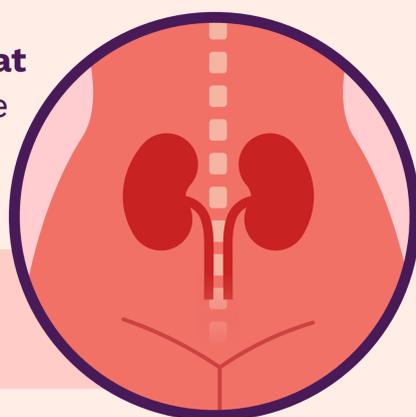


The Power of the Kidneys

Find out how these organs work and what can damage them

Kidneys are bean-shaped organs that sit behind your belly. There is one kidney on either side of your spine, just below your rib cage.

Did you know? Many people can live healthy lives with only one kidney.



Kidneys are an important part of the urinary tract. Their job is to:



Filter your blood



Remove waste and extra water, which leave your body as urine



Keep the right acid-base balance (pH) in your blood



Balance electrolytes in your body



Help control blood pressure



What are electrolytes?

Electrolytes are minerals, including sodium and potassium, that support muscle and nerve function.

Kidneys also produce hormones that help your body:



Make red blood cells



Absorb calcium and keep bones strong

Some common conditions that can affect your kidneys are:



Chronic kidney disease (CKD)



Kidney failure



Polycystic kidney disease (PKD)



Infections



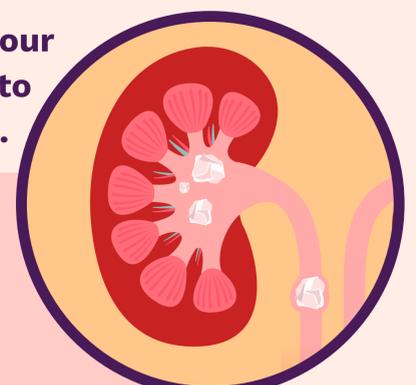
Kidney cancer (renal cell carcinoma)



Cysts

Kidney stones can sometimes harm your kidneys if they block urine flow or lead to infection, especially if they occur often.

Did you know? Kidney stones are hard deposits that form when salts and minerals like calcium oxalate, calcium phosphate and uric acid stick together in your urine.



There are 4 types of kidney stones:



Calcium stones



Uric acid stones



Struvite stones



Cystine stones

Kidney stones happen for many reasons, but in rare cases, they can be the first sign of a genetic condition called **primary hyperoxaluria**.

People living with primary hyperoxaluria:



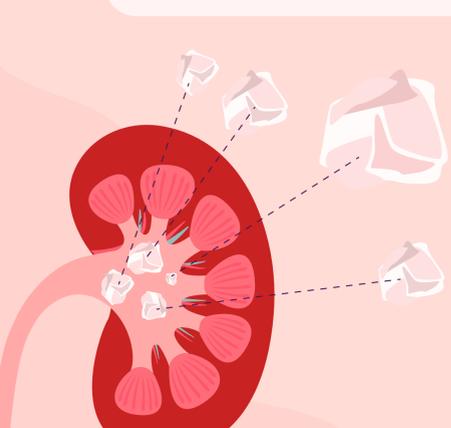
Are born with the condition (primary)



Make too much oxalate (hyperoxaluria)

Your kidneys clean oxalate (a waste product) from the body.

Extra oxalate can combine with calcium to form calcium oxalate crystals that can become kidney stones.



Get your kidney stones tested

If you pass a stone or have one removed, testing it can help your healthcare provider figure out what type it is, what may have caused it and how to lower your risk of future stones.

