



Keeping your heart healthy with chronic kidney disease

Your heart and kidneys work together to keep you healthy! When you have chronic kidney disease (CKD) you have a higher risk for heart disease—and having heart disease can also increase your risk of CKD. This is why it's important to keep your heart healthy when living with CKD.

What is cardiovascular disease?

Your heart and blood vessels, including both arteries and veins, make up your cardiovascular system. Cardiovascular disease includes conditions that affect the health of this system like high blood pressure, coronary artery disease, stroke, heart attack, and others.



CKD and your heart

When you have CKD, extra fluid can build up and put more stress on your heart. The extra fluid causes your heart to pump harder and can lead to heart disease and high blood pressure.

Your kidneys also work to remove waste and toxins from your blood. If you have CKD, your kidneys cannot do this job as well. Buildup of wastes and toxins can cause your heart and blood vessels to not be as healthy.



**Tips for keeping your heart healthy**

Heart disease and CKD have many of the same risk factors such as high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, and smoking, so taking steps to manage them can protect both your heart and kidneys. Some lifestyle changes you can make include:

- **Getting regular exercise**

Adding regular physical activity to your day can help you keep your heart healthy, stabilize blood sugars, maintain a healthy weight, and manage stress too! Choose an activity you enjoy like walking, yoga, dancing, tennis, gardening, or swimming. Talk to your care team before starting an exercise routine.

- **Eating a healthy, well-balanced diet**

Following a diet that is low in sodium and rich in wholesome foods such as fruits and vegetables can keep your heart and kidneys healthy. Your team can work with you to create a nutrition plan that meets your overall health goals.

- **Maintaining a healthy body weight**

Losing weight if needed can help lower your blood pressure and protect your heart and kidneys. Your care team can help you determine your ideal weight.

- **Avoiding smoking**

Any amount of smoking can cause damage to your heart and blood vessels. If you need help quitting, talk to your care team to get the support you need.

- **Taking your medications**

It's important to take all your medications as prescribed. Check with your care team to determine what medications you should be taking and how frequently.

- **Managing your stress**

Keep your heart healthy by adding habits that help manage your stress. Some examples include regular exercise, finding activities that bring you joy, getting enough sleep, limiting your alcohol, and connecting with others.

**We're here to help**

Your care team can help answer your questions about keeping your heart healthy. Reach out for any support you need.