

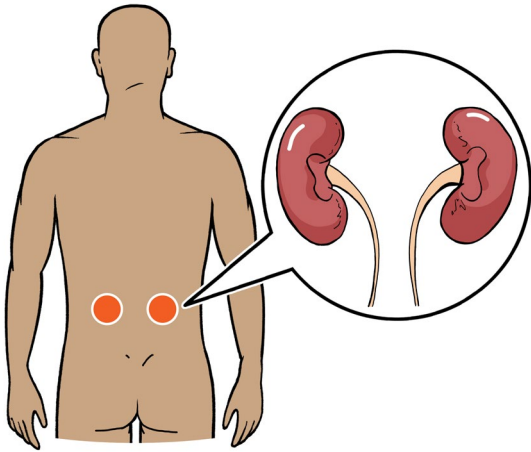
Chronic kidney disease

Information booklet



Easy read

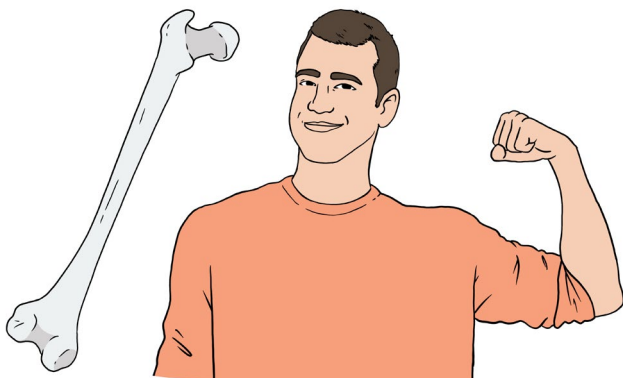
Kidneys



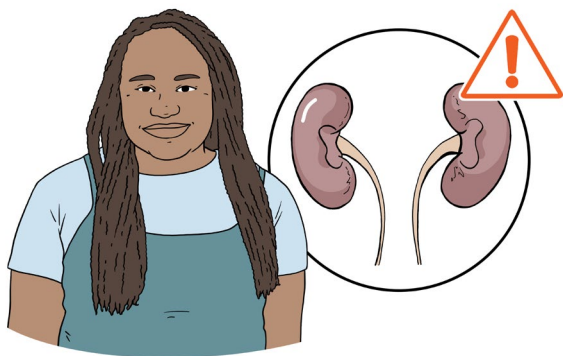
Most people have 2 **kidneys**. Your kidneys are in your lower back under the bottom rib. They are about the size of your fist and are shaped like kidney beans.

Your kidneys do lots of important jobs to keep you healthy, like:

- cleaning your blood
- getting rid of waste from your body in your wee
- keeping your bones strong.

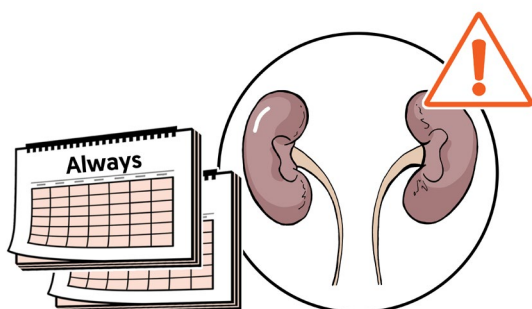


Chronic kidney disease (CKD)

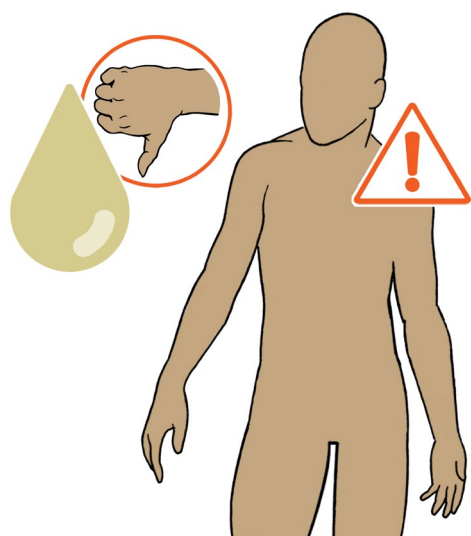


Chronic kidney disease (CKD)

means that your kidneys do not work as well as they should.



Chronic means that it is a long term illness and will last the rest of your life.



If you have CKD then your kidneys can not get rid of waste in your body properly. This means that waste can build up in your body.

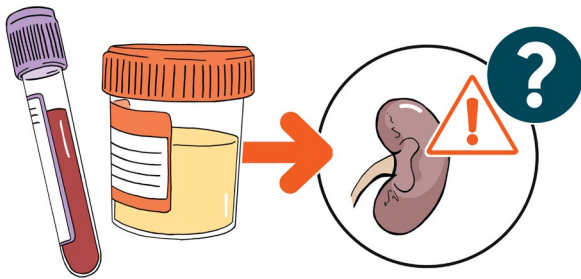


The **filter system** is the parts of your kidneys that help to clean your blood. Damage to your kidney filter system can cause blood and protein to leak into your wee.

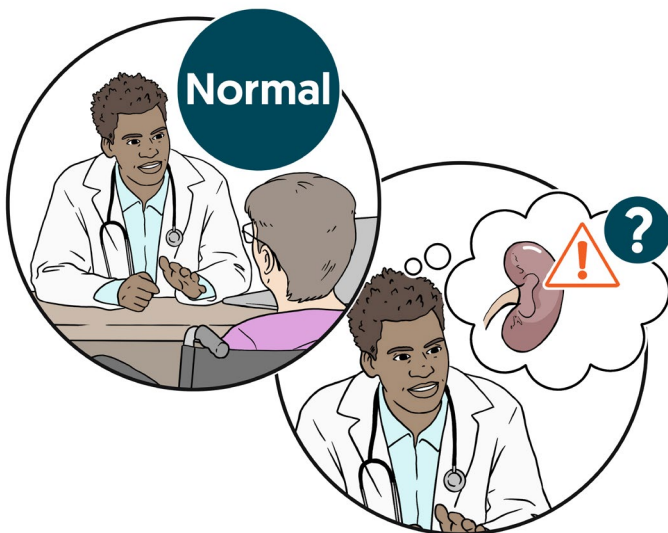
How is CKD diagnosed?



Being **diagnosed** means when the doctor found out that you had CKD.



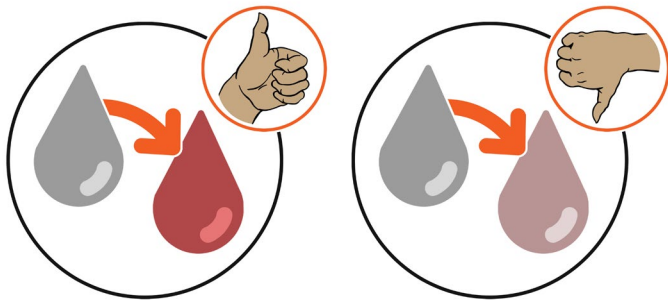
CKD is normally diagnosed by testing your blood and wee. When wee is tested it is called a **urine test**.



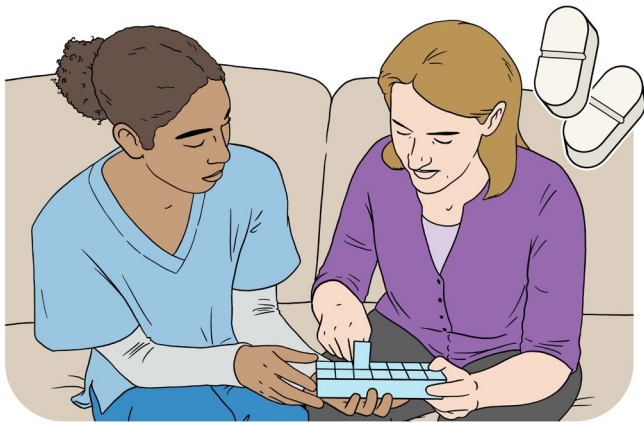
You may have these tests as part of a normal check up with your doctor, or because your doctor thinks you may have CKD.



There are 5 stages of CKD. It starts at stage 1 and can go up to stage 5 if it gets worse.



What stage you are diagnosed with depends on how well your kidneys clean your blood.



Most people with CKD stages 1, 2 and 3 manage it themselves with support from their doctor. This could be things like taking medicine and eating a healthy diet.



If your CKD reaches stage 4, your doctor will send you to a specialist kidney doctor, called a **nephrologist**, at a hospital for treatment.

Who gets CKD?



CKD is very common. It affects around 1 in 10 people in the UK.



CKD can affect people of all ages, including babies and children.



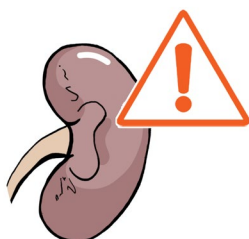
CKD can **run in families**. This means that many members of a family have it.



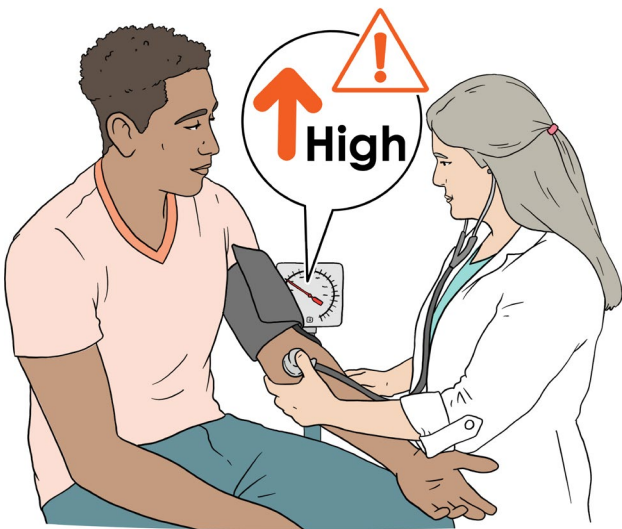
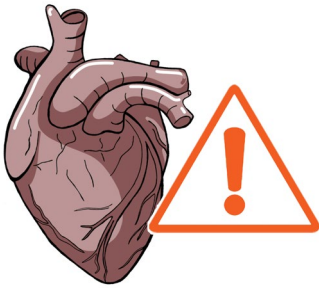
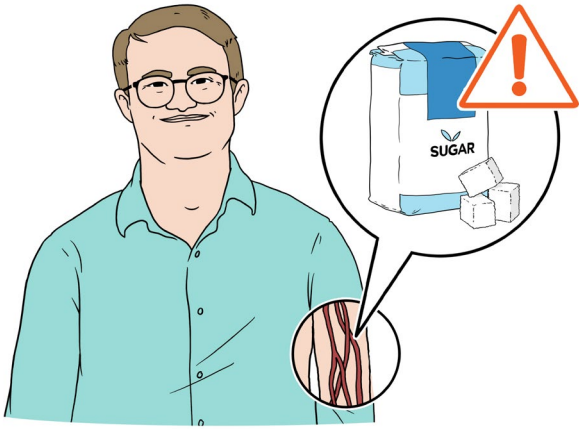
CKD is more common in people from **Black and Asian backgrounds**. This means people who are Black or Asian, or have family that are, like parents or grandparents.

What causes CKD?

Causes	
1	_____
2	_____
3	_____
4	_____



There are lots of causes of CKD. We have made a list of causes but this does not include every cause.



Causes of CKD include:

- **Diabetes**

This is an illness where your body can not control the amount of sugar in your blood.

- Heart disease

- **High blood pressure**

Blood pressure measures how strongly your blood is being pumped around your body.

- Family history of kidney disease

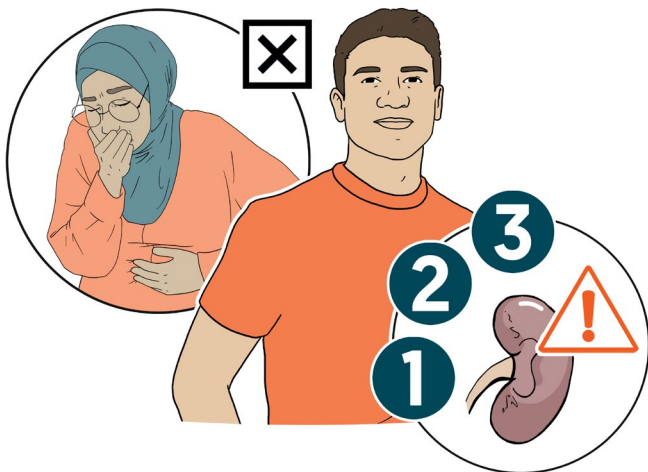


- Long term, regular use of some medicines, including ibuprofen and naproxen.



Talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure about the medicine you are on and if it could cause CKD.

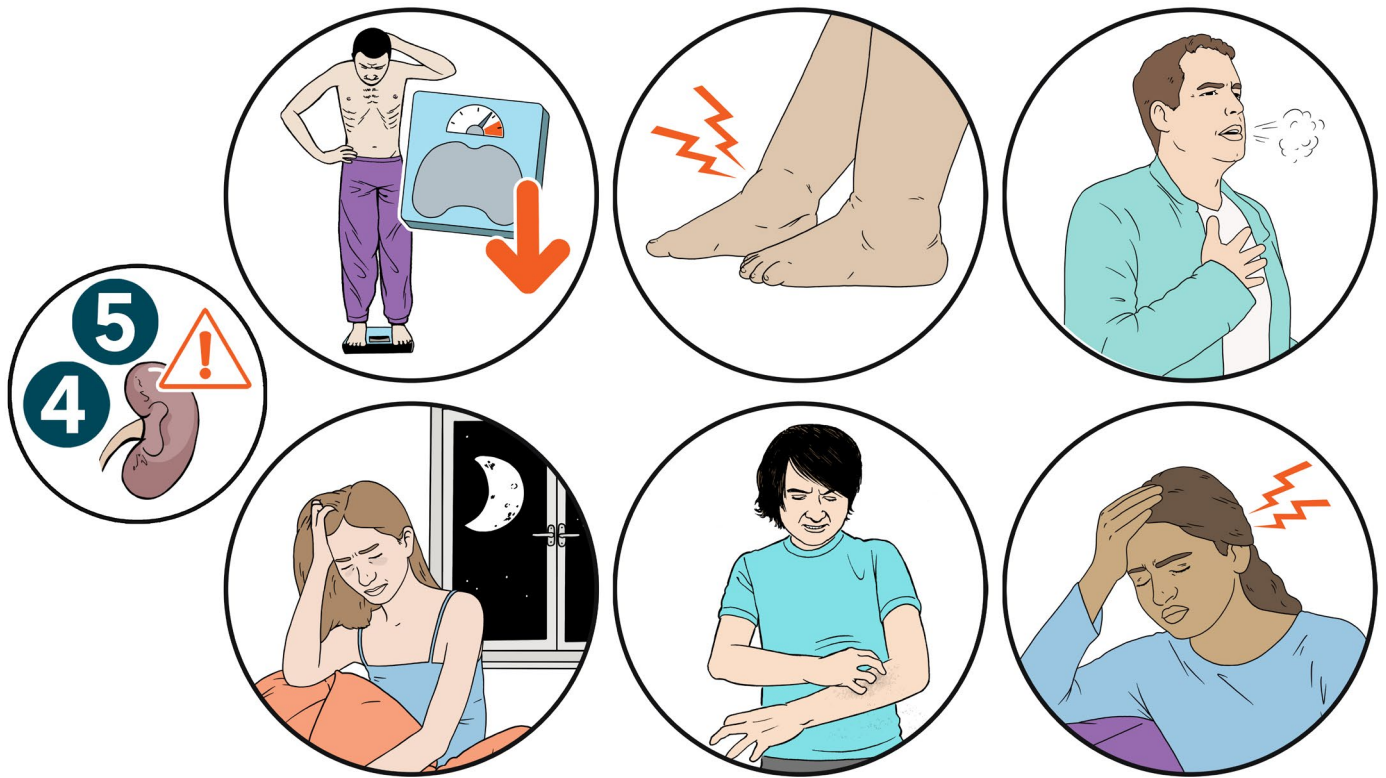
What are the symptoms of CKD?



Most people with CKD stages 1, 2 or 3 do not have any **symptoms**. Symptoms are signs in your body that something is wrong, like feeling sick.



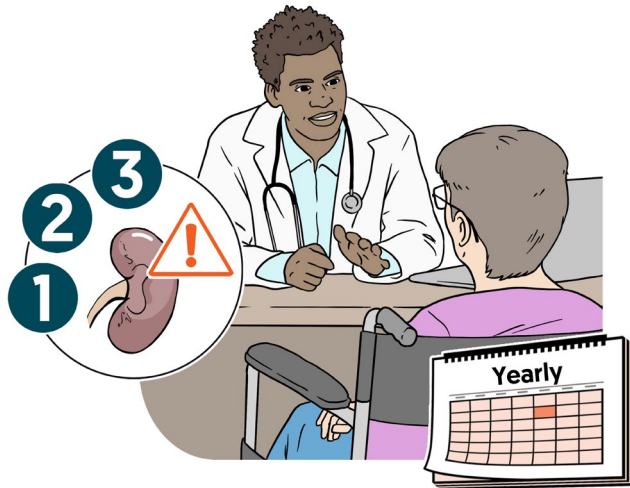
People with CKD stages 4 or 5 may have symptoms. We have made a list of possible symptoms.



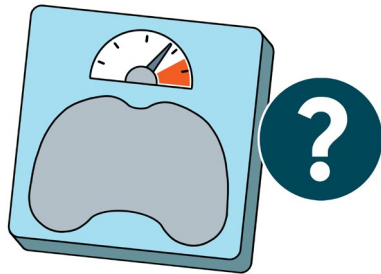
Possible symptoms at CKD stages 4 and 5 include:

- Tiredness and low energy.
- Weight loss and poor **appetite**. This means how hungry you feel.
- Swollen ankles, feet or hands, or puffiness around the face.
- **Shortness of breath**. This is when you find it hard to breathe normally or get out of breath easily.
- Blood in your wee.
- Needing to wee more often, especially at night.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Itchy skin.
- Muscle cramps or weakness in your muscles.
- Feeling sick.
- Headaches.

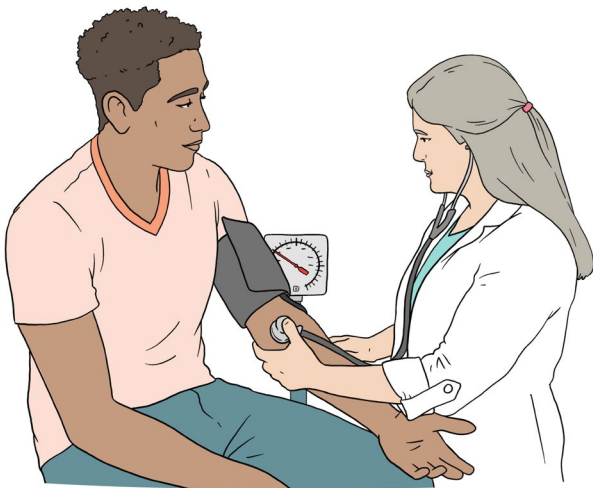
What happens after I have been diagnosed?



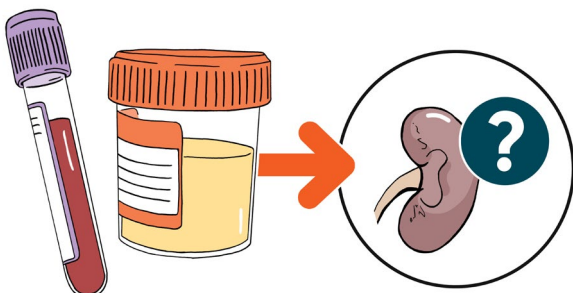
If you have been diagnosed with CKD stage 1, 2, or 3 you will have appointments with your doctor each year to check your health.



At your appointment you will have your weight measured.



You will have your blood pressure measured.



You will also have a urine test and a blood test to check how well your kidneys are working.

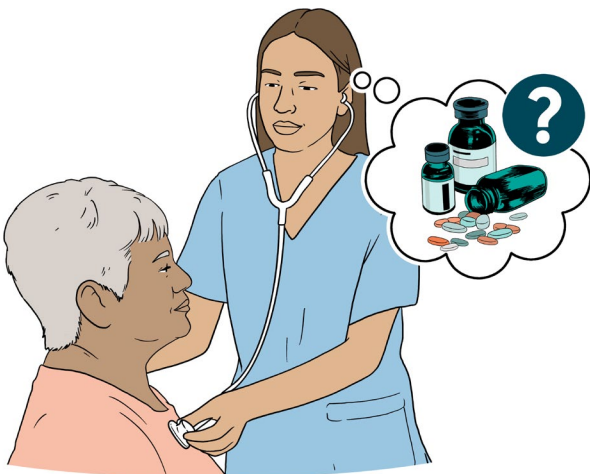


Your doctor will talk to you about any symptoms you may be having.



They will also tell you if you need any treatment.

How is CKD treated in stage 1, 2 and 3?



If you have CKD stage 1, 2 or 3 and your kidneys work well enough, you may not need any treatment. Your doctor will decide if you need any treatment.



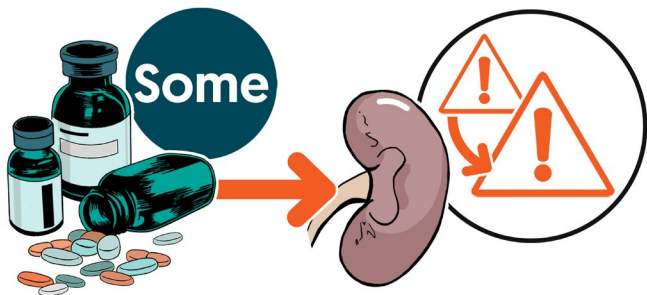
To do	
1	_____
2	_____
3	_____
4	_____

If you have CKD stage 1, 2, or 3 it is good to try and stay healthy. We have made a list of things you can do to stay healthy.



To stay healthy you can:

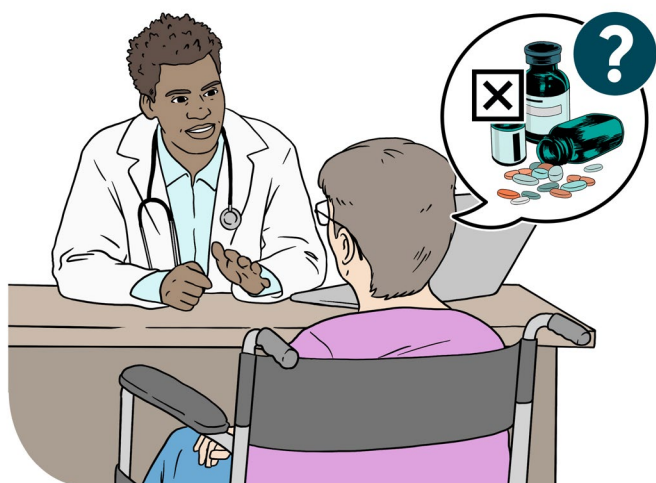
- Eat a balanced diet.
- Keep active and move as much as possible.
- Keep up to date with your **vaccinations**. A **vaccine** is medicine that helps keep you safe from an illness.
Ask your doctor about having vaccines for flu, pneumonia and Covid-19.
- Stop smoking.
- Stop drinking alcohol or drink less alcohol.
- Check your blood pressure regularly.
Your doctor can teach you how to check your blood pressure yourself at home.



Some medicines can make your kidney disease worse.

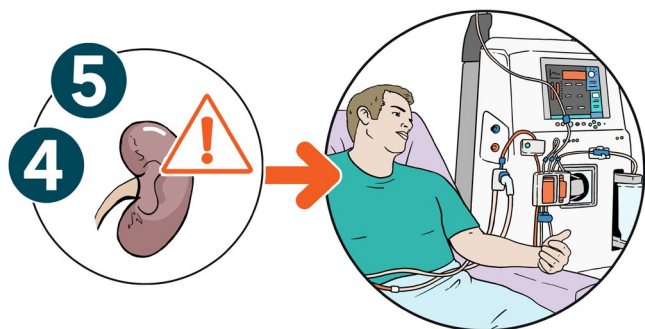


Tell your doctor and pharmacist that you have CKD and check that medicine you are given is safe to take.

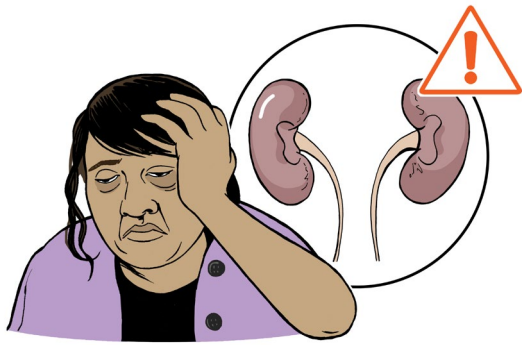


You should not stop taking any medicine you have been given by your doctor without talking to your doctor or a pharmacist first.

How is CKD treated in stage 4 and 5?



CKD at stage 4 and 5 is likely to need more treatment. CKD stage 5 is known as **kidney failure**.



In **kidney failure**, the kidneys can no longer work well enough to keep you healthy.



1 in 50 people with CKD go on to have kidney failure.

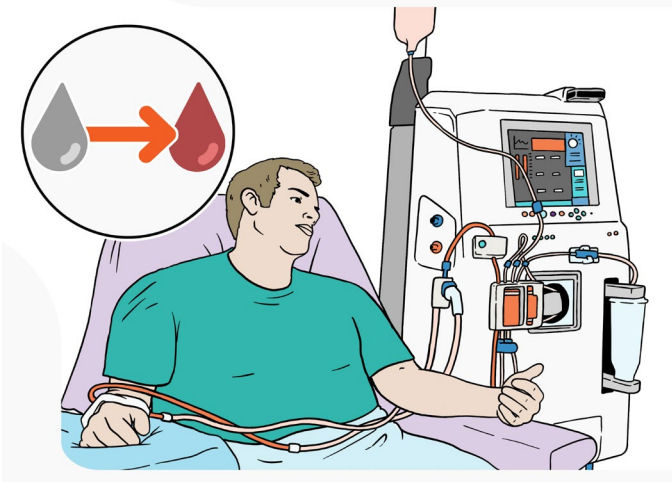
There are 3 main types of treatment for CKD stage 5:

1. Dialysis

This uses a machine or equipment to clean a person's blood. This is what kidneys do on their own if they are healthy.

2. Kidney transplant

This is an operation where doctors put a healthy kidney from someone else into a person with kidney failure. Someone who gives one of their kidneys to someone else is called a donor.



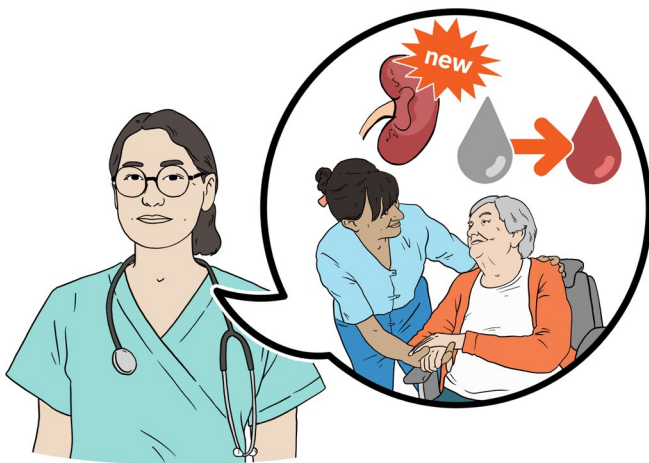


3. Conservative care or supportive care

This is care to manage the symptoms of kidney disease and keep your kidneys working for as long as possible without dialysis.



Dialysis can help to keep most people alive for longer but it does not help everyone. People who are very old or have serious health issues may not be helped by dialysis.



Your kidney team will give you support and advice to help you understand your treatment options.

More information

Kidney Care UK has information about kidney health here:



www.kidneycareuk.org/about-kidney-health

The NHS has information about chronic kidney disease (CKD) here:



www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-disease

This easy read booklet uses simple language and pictures to tell you about chronic kidney disease (CKD). It has been made by Kidney Care UK, working with CHANGE.

CHANGE is a disability rights charity and accessible information expert.

Kidney Care UK is a support charity for kidney patients and their families. Contact us for advice and information on the free help that we offer.



Visit our website at: kidneycareuk.org



Email us at: support@kidneycareuk.org



Phone us at: **0808 801 00 00**



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UK Kidney Association

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