

Diabetic kidney damage

We have been asked to see you because your diabetes has caused some damage to your kidneys. This usually begins in a very minor way with very small amounts of protein leaking into the urine. The protein leak can gradually increase until the kidneys begin to fail and dialysis or transplantation may be required. This usually happens over a long period of time

There are several things we (and you) can do to slow down the damage to your kidneys. Some of these will also help to protect you from heart disease.

- Healthy living - You should reduce the amount of salt and fat that you eat, take more exercise and not smoke.
- Cholesterol - Your cholesterol level should be low (less than 3.5). This will be checked when you have your routine clinic blood test. You may be given a tablet of the *Statin* group to take at bedtime to help with this.
- Blood sugar - Your blood sugar levels are extremely important. Keeping your HbA1c level (which shows how your blood sugars are over a long period of time) very low (less than 48mmol/mol with blood sugars less than 5.5 before and 7 after a meal) can slow the kidney damage by as much as half.
- ACE inhibitors - If you have even a tiny amount of protein in your urine, you should be taking a tablet of the ACE inhibitor group (e.g. *Lisinopril*, *Ramipril*) or ARB group (e.g. *Valsartan*, *Irbesartan*). This has an excellent protective effect on the kidneys and is also good for your heart. It reduces blood pressure and can decrease the amount of protein in your urine. If you are unwell, there may be a need to stop taking this.
- Blood pressure - Reducing your blood pressure will also slow the kidney damage. Your blood pressure should be less than 130/80 (which is much lower than we would expect in non-diabetics). You may find several blood pressure tablets added to your ACE inhibitor - including calcium-channel blockers, water pills and others.

We will see you regularly in the clinic to help with all these issues. We will be checking your blood and urine tests. We will measure your blood pressure. We will review your treatment, so it is always helpful to bring a list of your tablets with you.

Kidney Care Nurses 0118 322 7899 Victoria Ward 0118 322 7476

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

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