

Maintaining a Kidney-Healthy Lifestyle

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You can have a major impact on your kidney disease. Take steps to practice a kidney-healthy lifestyle, and learn more about kidney disease and you. Studies show that people who take an active role in their kidney disease are generally healthier than those who don’t.

Here are some important steps you can take today to manage your kidney disease:

Exercise

Be sure to keep physically active. Work with your care team on a plan to exercise more, if needed.

Eat Right

Learn about which food choices are best for you:

- Make use of kidney health tools like grocery shopping tips, menu planners and recipes to help you make smart food choices.
- Read food labels to limit sodium, potassium and phosphorus.
- Keep a list of your favorite kidney-friendly food and beverage choices in your purse or wallet to help you at restaurants and social gatherings.

Drink the Right Fluids for You

Fluids that are high in phosphorous like dark-colored soft drinks aren’t the best choices for people with kidney disease. Water, low-fat milk and clear soft drinks are usually good choices.

Also, people in later stages of kidney disease may need to limit the intake of fluids and foods that turn into fluids. The right amount of fluid for one person with kidney disease might be too much or too little for someone else. Follow the advice of your care team to drink the right amount as well as type of fluids for you.

Manage Other Health Risks

- Control other health conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure, which can have a negative impact on kidney disease.
- Quit smoking.
- Lose weight if you are overweight or obese.
- Manage stress with relaxation techniques like meditation and taking part in favorite activities like gardening or reading.



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Keep a Health Diary

Use a health diary to stay on track. Keep track of doctor visits, medications, diet and exercise. You can even keep track of mood and symptoms. This will help you stay organized, notice trends and make the most of doctor visits.

Filter Health Information in the News

Today, there is tons of information online, in the news, and in our favorite magazines and newspapers about how to stay healthy. Be sure to work with your kidney care team to understand what’s healthy for you. Information about healthy lifestyles in the news may not be right for people with kidney disease. For example, people on the news talk about the importance of whole grains such as whole-wheat bread, but wheat bread is not the best option for someone with kidney disease because wheat bread is high in phosphorus.

Talk to Your Doctor and Other Care Professionals

Talk to your doctor about how you are feeling, any questions or symptoms you have, and any self-care like vitamins or alternative treatments such as acupuncture. It’s important for your doctor to understand all of the health measures you use and any challenges you are facing. Your doctor can help you make a plan that’s best for you.