

Bitesize Guide to:



Kidney failure

Your kidneys are two fist-sized organs located below your rib cage that are responsible for filtering blood. When operating correctly kidney's produce up to 2 quarts of urine each day in order to eliminate wastes and excess fluid. Kidney failure refers to any condition that leads to the abrupt or long-term failure of proper kidney operation. Such failures fall into two general categories. Here is our bitesize guide:

What is it?

In broad terms, kidney failure can be divided into two types.

Acute Renal Failure

Acute renal failure is the abrupt loss of your kidney's ability to properly filter blood. This failure ranges from minor to severe loss of function but is preceded by some form of damage to the kidney. As such, acute renal failure is most often the result of a separate medical complication that impacts proper kidney function.

Chronic Renal Failure

Chronic kidney refers to a gradual and persistent deterioration of kidney functionality. The symptoms of chronic renal failure may start out as subtle but left untreated may result in a potentially fatal loss of all functionality known as end-stage failure

Who gets it?

Acute Renal Failure

Acute renal failure predominantly affects those above the age of 65 with pre-existing kidney problems. Those taking aminoglycosides or those suffering from severe infection or sepsis are also more likely to suffer from acute renal failure.

Chronic Renal Failure

Chronic failure, like acute failure, is associated with aging. With age your kidney's will be more likely to deteriorate and see complications. Those of African-Caribbean or south Asian origin are also more likely to develop chronic failure.

Why does it happen?

There is no single cause of kidney failure. Instead, the condition most regularly results from the normal strain placed on your kidneys throughout life. If you experience any of the following symptoms please contact your GP:

Acute Renal Failure

- Low blood volume
- Certain medicines
- Problems with the blood vessels
- The heart pumping out less blood than normal

Chronic Renal Failure

- Diabetes
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Blockages in the flow of urine

Diagnosing Kidney failure

If you are experiencing any symptoms associated with kidney failure, book an appointment with your GP. Your GP will likely ask if you have observed blood in your urine, had trouble urinating, or have been feeling fatigued. Additionally, your GP may decide blood work is appropriate to determine a clearer understanding of your conditions.

Treating Kidney failure

If the failure is caught early simple lifestyle and healthy living changes may be sufficient to prevent worsening of failure. Medication is also often used to control high blood pressure or high cholesterol which often cause or exacerbate kidney failure. In cases of end-stage failure, when failure is not detected early, dialysis or a kidney transplant will be necessary.

4 Key Facts about Kidney failure

1. Smoking has been linked to kidney failure
2. Over 12% of the UK population suffer from a chronic kidney disease.
3. Exercise and a healthy diet are important in maintaining robust kidney health
4. Those suffering from chronic failure are more likely to suffer an acute failure

If you think you may be suffering from Kidney failure, speak to your GP.

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