

Video 3 Preserving Kidney Function - Managing Chronic Conditions

Key Notes

Many people with chronic kidney disease have diabetes. Whether you live with type 1 or type 2 diabetes, your blood sugar levels can greatly improve with changes in lifestyle.

Many people have lower blood sugar readings and need less insulin as their kidney function declines. Healthy kidneys use insulin and other diabetes medicines quickly and easily.

When kidney function declines the insulin is used more slowly, often resulting in lower blood sugars. It is important to work with your diabetes care team to adjust your medicines as kidney function declines.

Blood pressure also impacts kidney function. Talk to your kidney doctor about your blood pressure goal, then get a blood pressure monitor and check your blood pressure regularly. Many monitors will record your blood pressures so you can share them with your doctor on your next visit. Managing blood pressure is critical to prevent ongoing kidney damage and worsening kidney function.

Make sure to let your doctor know how you are doing with the medicine and bring in the most updated list of medicines to each visit so they can make changes, if needed.

Additional ways to lower blood pressure include

- Keeping sodium intake low - less than 2000 mg per day
- Sleeping 7-9 hours each night
- Exercising routinely
- Managing stress to keep life experience positive and inviting
- Losing excess weight
- Stopping tobacco use

Nutrition Recommendations

- Limit adding salt to your food and choose foods that are unprocessed and naturally lower in sodium, like fresh fruits and vegetables, lentils, beans, and whole grains.
- Recommended blood potassium level is less than 5 mg/dL. If it rises above this, it is important to avoid too much potassium from foods. Some common foods that are high in potassium are potatoes, tomatoes, dried fruit, bananas, and avocados.
- Recommended blood phosphorus level is under 5 mg/dL. If the level rises above that, it is useful to avoid foods high in phosphorus, like processed foods, soda, meat, and dairy. Whole grains and beans are also high in phosphorus, though because they are high in fiber, less phosphorus from these foods is absorbed in the body. Beans are a healthy, protein-rich food, even for people with kidney disease.
- A handout with nutrition resources is available for you to download on the web page with this video. Or you can ask for a printed copy when you come for a clinic visit.