

Achieve

A Newsletter
for AvMed
Members

▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH DIABETES

Diabetes and your kidneys

Diabetes and kidney troubles are closely connected. About 25% of people with diabetes also have kidney disease, according to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. And most kidney disease is caused by diabetes.

That's because high blood sugar can damage the tiny blood vessels in your kidneys. If you have both high blood sugar and high blood pressure, you're even more likely to have kidney issues.

Luckily, the condition is treatable. Medication and healthy eating can help slow kidney disease.



Early kidney disease often has no symptoms. So, regular testing is the best way to monitor your kidney health. Testing can help your doctor diagnose a problem, choose the right medications, monitor your progress, and suggest lifestyle changes.

Testing for kidney disease is easy.

It can be done with a simple urine test and/or blood test. Each test measures the buildup of waste that would normally be filtered out if the kidneys were working as they should. If you have type 2

Get these health checks regularly to prevent diabetes complications:

A1c: Assesses your average blood sugar over the past few months

Urine protein: Screens for early signs of kidney damage

Dilated eye exam: Screens for diabetic eye diseases

Blood pressure: Monitors risk of hypertension

diabetes, or if you have had type 1 diabetes for more than five years, you should get tested every year. Ask your doctor if you're due for one or both of these tests to check the health of your kidneys.

Ask the Diabetes Doctor

Q How might a cold/flu/COVID-19 affect my child's diabetes?

A Getting sick is no fun. But for kids with diabetes, it can be even more complicated. Here's what can happen when your child is sick:

He or she may be at risk of ketoacidosis. "Being ill is a stress to your child's body," says Kathleen Bethin, M.D. She's a pediatric endocrinologist and spokesperson for the American Academy of Pediatrics. "It can raise their blood sugars and make them more susceptible to producing ketones."

That can lead to a medical emergency called diabetic ketoacidosis. If your child is more thirsty and/or peeing more than usual, has a headache, or has fruity-smelling breath, call your doctor right away.

He or she may have high blood sugar. Soothing your child's symptoms with cough syrups and decongestants? Many contain sugar, which will make his or her glucose levels even higher. Opt instead for sugar-free cough syrups and choose pills with no carbohydrates to help relieve pain and congestion. Talk to your doctor about the best ways to relieve symptoms.

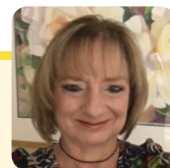
He or she may have low blood sugar. "When kids are sick, they may not feel like eating, which can make their blood sugar low," Dr. Bethin points out. Check your child's glucose levels often. Keep simple, easy-on-the-tummy foods on hand, like crackers, noodle soup, unsweetened applesauce, and yogurt. And make sure he or she stays well hydrated.

Care Advocate Spotlight

Diana Hall has been with AvMed for 17 years, 15 years as a Member Engagement Representative, and 2 years as a Care Advocate.

"My favorite thing about being a Care Advocate is helping members with their health care needs and making a difference in their lives."

To reach us, please call 1-833-609-0735





Healthy Eating Made Simple

Elizabeth Ferrer, R.D., AvMed's Registered Dietitian, shares her favorite tips for happier, healthier meals — without feeling deprived.



Healthy holiday swaps

While “special occasion” treats can certainly be part of a healthy diet, the holiday season ushers in a lot of “special occasions” that can make it harder to stick to a healthy eating plan at this time of year. But these small changes can help.

Swap in non-starchy vegetables.

They're lower in carbs and higher in fiber. For example, try mixing mashed potatoes with cauliflower. Other non-

starchy vegetables include mushrooms, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, leafy greens, and eggplant.

Go for brothy soups instead of creamy soups.

They're less calorie dense, but just as comforting. Examples: chicken noodle, french onion, ramen, minestrone and more.

Keep sides simple.

Instead of rich, creamy casseroles, opt for simple roasted vegetables made with olive oil and herbs.

Choose lighter dips.

Hummus, guacamole and salsa have less saturated fat than creamy dips.

Use oils instead of butter and cream.

Oils are lower in saturated fat and provide heart-healthy unsaturated fats.

Use lower-fat dairy.

For example, use Greek yogurt instead of sour cream. It has more protein and less saturated fat.

Choose snacks wisely.

Instead of chips and cheese, go for low-calorie options like raw veggies, popcorn, and fresh fruit.

Cut the sugar in half.

You can almost always get away with less sugar in dessert recipes. Add extra spices for more flavor.

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Recipe



Dark Chocolate Bark with Hazelnuts and Cranberries

Serves 12 | Prep time: 15 minutes

This dessert looks impressive, but it's also a breeze to make. Experiment with different nuts and dried fruits.

Ingredients

12 ounces dark chocolate,
finely chopped

¼ cup chopped hazelnuts

¼ cup dried cranberries

Directions

1. Line a rimmed baking dish with parchment paper.

2. Bring 1 inch of water to a simmer in a saucepan, then reduce heat to low. Place a heatproof bowl on top of the saucepan that fits snugly but doesn't

touch the water. Add the chocolate to the bowl and stir until just melted.

3. Pour the melted chocolate onto the baking sheet, then sprinkle with the hazelnuts and cranberries. Refrigerate for 1 hour, then break into large pieces.

Nutrition Info (per serving)

Calories 190 | Fat 12g (Sat Fat 6g) | Cholesterol 0mg | Sodium 0mg | Carbs 18g | Fiber 3g | Sugar 13g (inc. 11g Added Sugar) | Protein 2g Vit D 0µg | Calcium 20mg | Iron 2mg | Potassium 179mg