



Keeping your kidneys and bladder healthy



Our kidneys and bladder are like the cleaning crew that keep our bodies healthy. The kidneys filter all the blood in our bodies every 30 minutes, removing waste and extra fluid, which is then stored in and passed by the bladder as urine.

They generally work without us even noticing, but when problems develop, they can cause discomfort and potentially lead to more serious health issues. Common kidney and bladder disorders include:

Urinary tract infections (UTIs): UTIs are the second most common infection in the body.¹ They affect women and people with diabetes most, but men can get UTIs, too. Kidney infections and bladder infections are also types of UTIs.

Bladder control problems: Urinary incontinence is a common issue. It can range from a small leak when coughing or laughing to not being able to hold in urine and reach a toilet in time.

Kidney stones: Each year, more than half a million people go to the emergency room (ER) with kidney stones.² Kidney stones are pebble-like crystals formed from minerals and salt in the urine.

Chronic kidney disease (CKD): With CKD, the kidneys cannot filter blood as they should. That means too much fluid and waste stay in the body, which can lead to other health problems.

Be aware of the risk factors

Talk with your healthcare provider if you have any of these risk factors:

- Family history of kidney or bladder disorders
- High blood pressure
- History of kidney stones
- Obesity
- Type 1 or 2 diabetes

Keep your kidneys and bladder healthy

Having a kidney or bladder infection can be painful, and chronic kidney disease raises the chances of having heart disease, heart attacks, and strokes. That's why it's best to prevent issues before they start by practicing healthy habits.

- Drink plenty of water to help flush your system.
- Have regular checkups, especially if you have risk factors.
- Keep your blood pressure in check.
- Limit caffeine and alcohol.
- Practice good hygiene.
- Stay active to help manage blood pressure, blood sugar, and weight.
- Stop smoking.
- Watch what you eat and avoid too much salt or sugar.

Know the symptoms

If you have any of the following symptoms, talk to your doctor, live chat with us on the SydneySM Health mobile app, or call the 24/7 NurseLine at the number on your health plan ID card.

- Persistent or worsening pain in your lower back, belly, or sides
- Blood in urine
- Frequent urge to urinate
- Pain or burning feeling while urinating
- Cloudy or foul-smelling urine

When and where to seek medical care

If you have symptoms, call your primary care doctor or connect with a doctor virtually through the Sydney Health app or on **anthem.com**. If you're unsure about your symptoms, you can also try the symptom checker on Sydney Health for guidance.

If your symptoms are accompanied by fever, chills, or vomiting, visit an urgent care center. For true medical emergencies, call 911 or go to the ER right away.



Find a doctor

To find a doctor or healthcare provider in your plan's network, use the Find Care and Cost feature on the Sydney Health app or at **anthem.com**.

Sources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *About Chronic Kidney Disease* (accessed June 2023); [cdc.org](https://www.cdc.org).

National Institute on Aging: *15 Tips to Keep Your Bladder Healthy* (accessed June 2023); [nia.nih.gov](https://www.nia.nih.gov).

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (accessed June 2023); [niddk.nih.gov](https://www.niddk.nih.gov).

1 Urology Care Foundation: *Understanding UTIs Across the Lifespan* (accessed June 2023); [urologyhealth.org](https://www.urologyhealth.org).

2 National Kidney Foundation: *Kidney Stones* (accessed June 2023); [kidney.org](https://www.kidney.org).

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