



# Candid Conversations about Diabetes and Kidney Health

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2015 AADE Diabetes Educator of the Year

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New York-Presbyterian Hospital

Samantha Shanken Baker  
Person living with diabetes and CKD



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# What is Chronic Kidney Disease?

- Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is a gradual loss of kidney function over time. This loss of function can occur over many years.
- How does it relate to diabetes?

# The Two Main Causes of Kidney Disease

- Diabetes
- High blood pressure

# How Does Diabetes Affect the Kidneys?

- Kidneys have blood vessels that filter out wastes and extra fluid
- With diabetes, these vessels become narrow and clogged because of high blood sugar
- The kidneys are then less able to filter wastes and fluids
- They are also less able to retain the protein albumin, which gets lost in the urine

# Diabetes and Your Kidneys

- Diabetes is the most common risk factor for kidney disease
- People with diabetes should be tested for kidney disease every year
- Blood sugar and blood pressure management are key to protecting the kidneys

# Diabetes and Your Kidneys

- About 1/3 of people with diabetes get kidney disease
- There are steps you can take to prevent or slow the onset or progression of kidney disease: Take charge!



# Quality of Life with Diabetes

- Your healthcare team, including an endocrinologist and diabetes educator, can provide you with the support you need.

# What Should You DO?

Get these 2 simple tests:

- Urinary albumin-to-creatinine ratio (ACR):
  - Too much albumin in your urine indicates the presence of kidney damage and can cause more kidney damage.
  - Albumin in the urine is a **SIGN** of kidney damage and a **CAUSE** of further kidney damage.
- Glomerular filtration rate (GFR): This blood test shows how well your kidneys are working.

# What Should You DO?

- See your healthcare professional on a regular basis.
- Know your A1c to see if your blood sugar is staying within a range that's good for you.
- Take your medications as prescribed.
- If you have high blood pressure, discuss with your healthcare professional the medications that will protect your kidneys.

# Are You at Risk?

- Be aware that symptoms for kidney disease are silent until it is very far advanced.
- Discuss risk factors with your healthcare team.
- Ask about getting tested for ACR and GFR.

# Prevention and Treatment

- Exercise and maintain a healthy weight.
- Medication: If you have kidney disease, try to avoid non-steroidal inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). Ask your healthcare team about other medication and supplements to avoid, or how to use drugs like metformin safely with kidney disease.
- Nutrition:
  - DASH diet for early-stage kidney disease. Certain dietary modifications may apply as kidney disease progresses.
  - Modifying sodium intake may improve blood pressure and possibly reduce albumin in the urine.
- Stress Management
- Lifestyle Behaviors

# Resources

- DiabetesSisters – [www.diabetessisters.org](http://www.diabetessisters.org)
- National Kidney Foundation – [nkfcare@kidney.org](mailto:nkfcare@kidney.org);  
1-855-NKF-CARES
- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases -- <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/>
- Center for Disease Control & Prevention – [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov);  
1-888-CDC-INFO