

# WHAT DO YOUR KIDNEYS ACTUALLY DO?

Everyone knows they have two kidneys, right? And maybe you know that they have something to do with wee. But do you have a clear idea of exactly what they do and the vital role they play in keeping your whole body healthy? Here are the key facts you need to know:

- KIDNEYS CLEAN YOUR BLOOD 40 TIMES EVERY DAY – A MASSIVE 180 LITRES**
- THEY REMOVE TOXINS, EXCESS WATER AND WASTE PRODUCTS TO MAKE URINE**
- KIDNEYS PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN REGULATING YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE**
- THEY ACTIVATE VITAMIN D TO KEEP YOUR BONES AND MUSCLES IN GOOD SHAPE**
- THEY'RE ESSENTIAL FOR A HEALTHY BODY**

Most of the time, kidneys work normally without any issues but sometimes they can be damaged or stop working so well. This is known as chronic kidney disease. It's a serious condition, affecting over three million people in the UK.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**AN ESTIMATED 60,000 PEOPLE IN THE UK DIE PREMATURELY EVERY YEAR DUE TO KIDNEY DISEASE**

## THE BIG IMPACT

If kidney disease goes undetected or is not well-managed, it can progress to kidney failure, which is fatal without treatment. Patients with kidney failure need regular dialysis or a transplant. This impact on people's lives is rarely spoken about. Kidney failure affects more than your physical health. It also impacts your social life, relationships, financial and emotional wellbeing. Your chances of having a baby can be greatly reduced as well. Imagine having to visit the hospital three times a week for a four-hour dialysis session. How would you fit this around your job or picking the kids up from school or going on holiday? Kidneys can't be ignored. **Kidneys Matter.**

**THE AVERAGE SIZE OF A HEALTHY KIDNEY IS 10-12CM LONG**



**1 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE UK DON'T KNOW THEY HAVE KIDNEY DISEASE**

## ARE YOU AT RISK?

Kidney disease is often silent in its early stages with no obvious symptoms. Prompt diagnosis and treatment, as well as changes to your diet and lifestyle are vital and can help to slow down or prevent further damage. Anyone can develop kidney disease but there are some factors which can increase your risk:

- DIABETES**
- HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE**
- HEART AND CIRCULATORY DISEASE**
- FAMILY HISTORY OF KIDNEY DISEASE**
- BEING FROM A BLACK, ASIAN OR MINORITY ETHNIC BACKGROUND**

If you are at increased risk, it's doubly important to have regular health checks with your GP. Uncontrolled diabetes and high blood pressure are the biggest causes of kidney failure. Being very overweight also puts you in the 'at risk' category. Look at our six steps to keep your kidneys fighting fit and in tip top condition.