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(Link: www.nhs.uk/)

Symptoms

Chronic kidney disease

Overview (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-disease/)

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Many people with chronic kidney disease (CKD) will not have symptoms because it does not usually cause problems until it reaches an advanced stage.

Early stages of CKD

Kidney disease does not tend to cause symptoms when it's at an early stage.

This is because the body is usually able to cope with a significant reduction in kidney function.

Kidney disease is often only diagnosed at this stage if a routine test for another condition, such as a blood or urine test, detects a possible problem.

If it's found at an early stage, medicine and regular tests to monitor it may help stop it becoming more advanced.

Later stages of CKD

A number of symptoms can develop if kidney disease is not found early or it gets worse despite treatment.

Symptoms can include:

- weight loss and poor appetite
- swollen ankles, feet or hands – as a result of water retention (oedema) (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/oedema/)
- shortness of breath (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/shortness-of-breath/)
- tiredness
- blood in your pee (urine) (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/blood-in-urine/)
- an increased need to pee – particularly at night

- difficulty sleeping (insomnia) (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/insomnia/)
- itchy skin (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/itchy-skin/)
- muscle cramps
- feeling sick
- headaches (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/headaches/)
- erectile dysfunction (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/erection-problems-erectile-dysfunction/) in men

This stage of CKD is known as kidney failure, end-stage renal disease or established renal failure. It may eventually require treatment with dialysis (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/dialysis/) or a kidney transplant (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-transplant/).

When to get medical advice

See your GP if you have persistent or worrying symptoms that you think could be caused by kidney disease.

The symptoms of kidney disease can be caused by many less serious conditions, so it's important to get a proper diagnosis.

If you do have CKD, it's best to get it diagnosed as soon as possible. Kidney disease can be diagnosed by having blood and urine tests.

Find out more about how CKD is diagnosed (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-disease/diagnosis/).

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