



What happens if I do develop kidney disease?

At this point, the focus of treatment is to prevent the development of complications. This includes controlling blood glucose and blood pressure levels, avoiding drugs that cause or worsen kidney damage, and adopting a diet that limits sodium and potassium.

If your kidney disease gets worse, it will slowly progress to what is called end-stage kidney failure. This is when your kidneys cannot filter waste products out of your blood, resulting in the need for dialysis. Dialysis helps to remove toxins, waste, and fluid from your body when your kidneys are not working properly. Your doctor will inform you more about which type of dialysis may be best for you.

Remember, acting early on in life can prevent you from developing kidney disease. Make sure you attend regular check-ups and do your best to stay healthy with your diabetes.

For more information, please contact:

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate

2326 6000



healthpromotion.hpdp@gov.mt



DIABETES AND KIDNEY CARE

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by the Health Promotion and Disease
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GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
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Health Promotion & Disease
Prevention Directorate



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Diabetes and kidney care

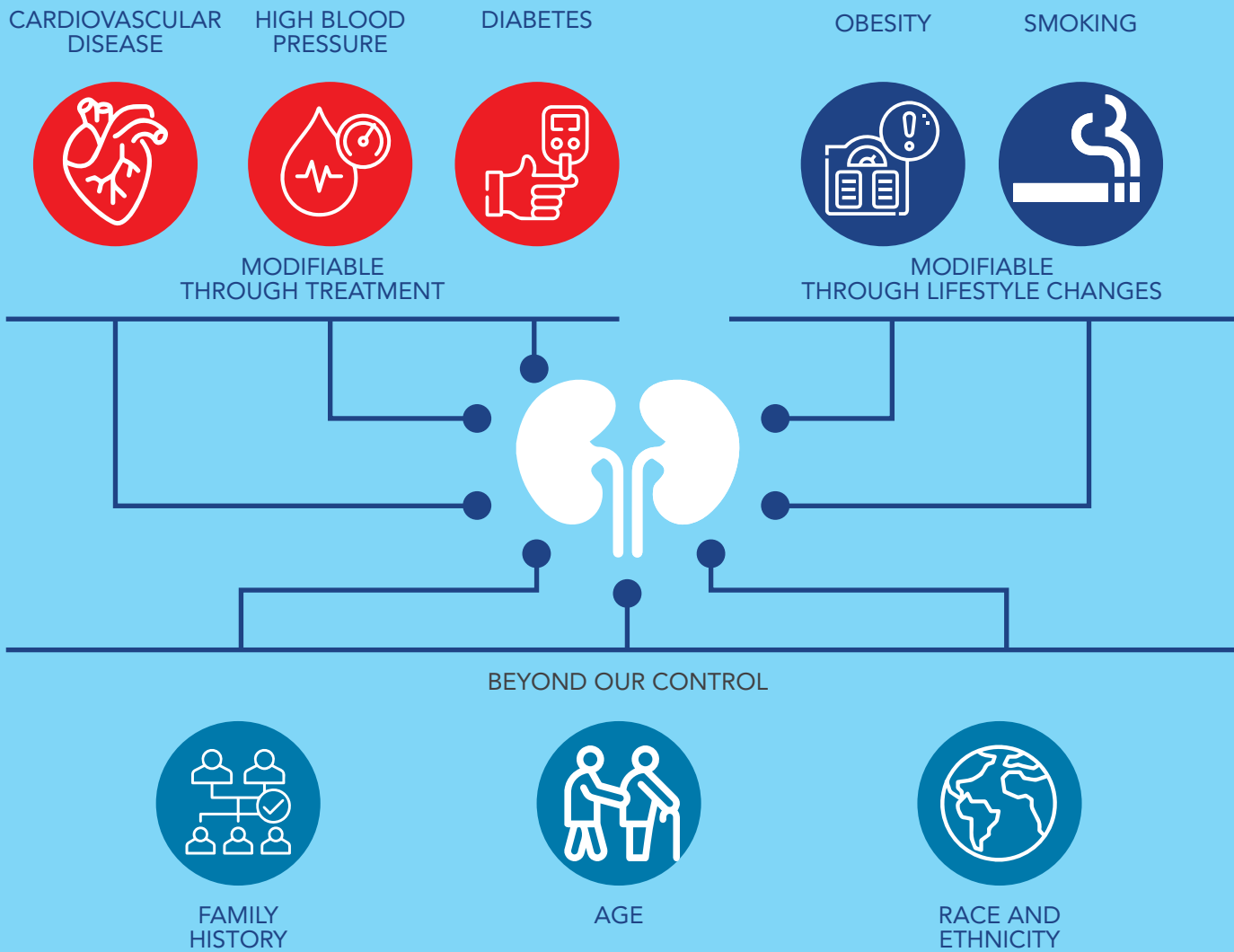
Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney disease, affecting 1 in 3 people with diabetes. Kidney disease often develops slowly and with few symptoms. Understanding the connection between diabetes and kidney disease can help you take steps to protect your health.

What is diabetic kidney disease?

Your kidneys are bean-shaped organs located in your lower back, beneath the rib cage. They are constantly filtering your blood-removing extra water, waste from food and drinks, and leftovers from medications, to produce urine. Kidneys also help control blood pressure, produce hormones and chemicals for red cell production and keep bones healthy.

When kidneys become damaged, they are less able to remove waste material and excess water from the blood. This may happen quickly with an injury or illness, or over time with a disease like diabetes. When kidney disease develops over time, it is also known as chronic kidney disease (CKD).

What are the risk factors for CKD?



How can I avoid developing kidney disease?

You can keep your kidneys healthy by managing your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels. Try to be more physically active and consume foods lower in salt and fat, more seasonal fruits and vegetables.

What are the symptoms of kidney disease?

You cannot feel if your kidneys have been damaged due to diabetes. The earliest sign of kidney disease is an increased amount of protein (albumin) in the urine. As your kidneys fail, other signs or symptoms may occur:

High blood pressure.

Ankle and leg swelling.

High levels of blood urea nitrogen (BUN) and creatinine in the blood. These measure the amount of waste in your blood. They may be referred to as kidney function blood tests.

Muscle cramps (especially in your legs).

Nausea, vomiting and weakness.

Pale, itchy skin.