

Kidney Health Information

Exercising

Your kidneys benefit because your whole body does

Exercising will:

- Reduce blood pressure and make your heart more capable.
- Your lungs will benefit too, you will have more 'puff!'
- Help you lose weight, and be a distraction from food as well as toning up the muscles, strengthening your ligaments and bones
- Boost morale as fitness improves, reduce anxiety, lift low moods and promote confidence and motivation. Your sleep will also be better!
- Exercising can be good fun as well as sociable
- As well as boosting your physical health, exercise promotes a positive attitude to life as the benefits are realised.
- If you are older and not so sure on your feet, exercising will make you stronger so you will have less risk of falls.
- Graduated exercise programmes have helped countless heart attack victims recover and re-habilitate to the active lifestyles they should have.

How can I exercise and become more active?

The current advice is to aim to build up to moderate exercise for 30 minutes three to five times each week. Although you needn't stop at 30 minutes if you are comfortable.

Renal patients

Transplant patients can do almost anything, but should be wary of sports having a risk of heavy contact or collision. Boxing and rugby for instance, are obviously risky. Some activities can be made safer by protective padding, but seek advice from your transplant team. .

This is because the donor kidney is transplanted into the pelvis and so is not protected by the ribcage.

Taking time to warm up before and cool down after exercise will help prevent muscle strain. If you feel unwell, stop and take time out. See your GP if symptoms or tiredness persist.

Dialysis patients have taken part in the European Transplant and Dialysis Federation Games, climbed mountains and gone skiing to mention just a few things. Of course, not everyone can do these things, but being on dialysis need not be the end of an active lifestyle. In fact exercise programmes have been set up in some parts of the country, especially for haemodialysis patients.

If you are less active, there are many exercises that can be done from a chair:

- Alternate leg raises
- Raising your arms in front of you and out to the sides while holding a small bottle of water or baked bean can in each hand.
- Yoga breathing exercises

Finding out more

[Managing your Condition](#) - NHS Choices

[The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy](#) – ‘Kidneys need Exercise too’

[British Heart Foundation](#) – Keeping your heart healthy

[Kidney Early Evaluation Project](#) - KEEP

Please be aware that we have made every effort to ensure this information is accurate, however we cannot guarantee that there are no mistakes. Also, the best management plans for individual patients may vary from those outlined here. Only the doctors caring for the patient will be able to advise on this. Please consult your own doctor.

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