



## Kidney Failure (Renal Failure)



### Overview

This is the loss of the function of your kidneys. These are the organs that filter your blood to produce urine. When your kidneys can no longer cleanse your blood, waste builds up in your body. This can be fatal.

### Causes

Kidney failure can happen suddenly over a period of hours or days. Traumatic injury, infections, toxins, medications and certain medical conditions can all cause your kidneys to fail. Your kidneys can also stop working gradually over a period of months or years. This can happen because of diabetes, high blood pressure and other diseases and conditions.

### Symptoms

Kidney failure is associated with a wide range of symptoms. You may experience fatigue, nausea and chest pain. Your legs, feet and ankles may swell with excess fluid. You may feel drowsy, or you may have problems with sleep. You may have shortness of breath and other problems. But not all people notice symptoms. And, you may have symptoms and not realize they are related to kidney failure until your body has been significantly damaged.

### Treatment

Treatment options depend on your symptoms and the reason for your kidney failure. If your kidneys have failed suddenly, options such as IV fluids, medications and dialysis may reverse the failure. If your kidneys have lost their function gradually, the failure may be permanent. You may benefit from lifestyle changes, medications and dialysis. You may benefit from a kidney transplant. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for your needs.

