

# Sex and Kidney Disease

Many men and women with kidney failure experience changes in their sexual lives. These changes may affect your interest in sex and your ability to have sexual relations. These changes may vary from person to person. There are both medical and emotional reasons for these changes. Medical reasons may include anemia, side effects of medications, and a build-up of waste products in the blood. Emotional reasons may include anxiety, depression, stress, and tension. It is common for men with kidney disease to become impotent, the inability to have or maintain an erection. Women with kidney disease may have a difficult time becoming aroused.

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If you are experiencing changes in your sexual activity it is important for you to discuss this with your doctor or with another member of your health care team (perhaps a social worker or nurse). Many of the problems associated with changes in sexual activity can be treated. Discussing your feelings with your significant other can also be helpful so he or she understands your desires and feelings. Remember you can show your feelings in other ways besides sex, such as kissing, hugging, and holding each other.

It is important to note that women with kidney disease can become pregnant. It is important for female patients to seek advice and information regarding birth control from their doctor.

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