

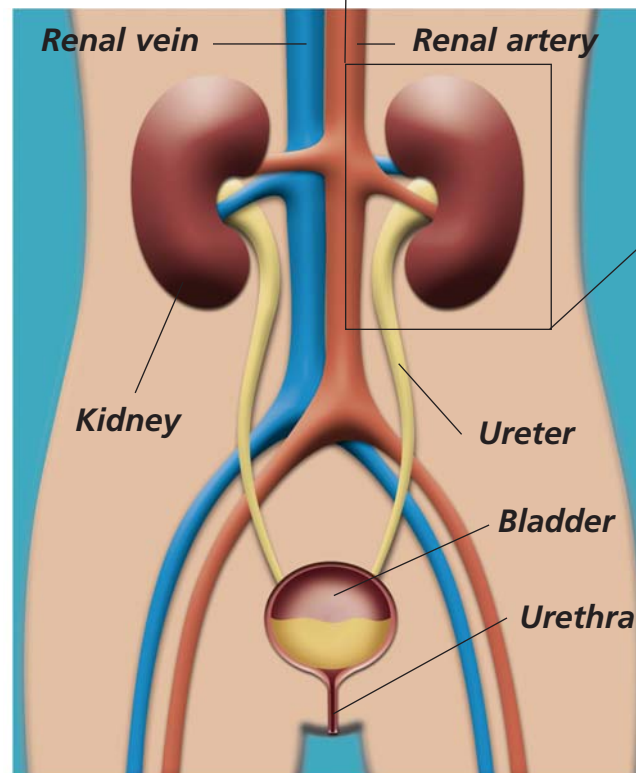
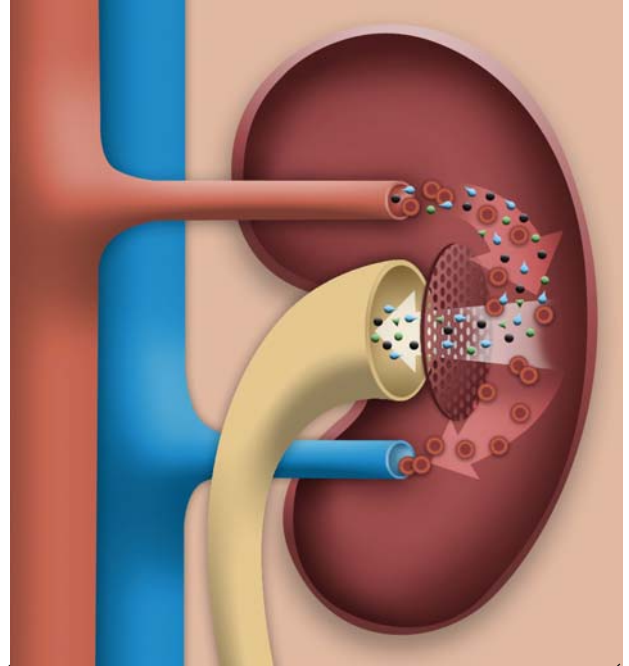
# Kidney Basics

The kidneys, two fist-sized organs, are located on either side of the spine just above the waist. Your kidneys:

- Clean the blood of wastes
- Remove extra fluid (water)
- Keep your body chemicals in balance: sodium, potassium, calcium and phosphorous etc.
- Help control blood pressure
- Help make red blood cells
- Produce vitamin D, which helps maintain the health of your bones

Diabetes, high blood pressure, glomerulonephritis, inherited diseases (such as polycystic kidney disease) are common causes of kidney disease.

There are a variety of symptoms of kidney disease, however, many people are unaware of kidney problems even though their kidneys are functioning at only 10-15% of normal capacity.



*This is a close-up of your kidneys at work. Blood flows into the kidney through the renal artery. It is cleaned and returns to the body through the renal vein. Waste and extra fluid removed from your blood leaves your body as urine.*

## Kidney Basics

Some symptoms of kidney disease include:

- Frequent thirst and urge to urinate
- The passing of very small amounts of urine
- Swelling, particularly of the hands and feet, and puffiness around the eyes
- Unpleasant taste in the mouth and urine-like odor to the breath
- Persistent fatigue or shortness of breath
- Loss of appetite
- Increasingly higher blood pressure
- Pale skin
- Excessively dry, persistently itchy skin

The following is a list of preventative measures that you may discuss with your physician as a means to delay the progression of kidney damage.

- Discuss all medications, even over-the-counter drugs, with your doctor
- Take all medications as prescribed
- If you have diabetes, keep your blood sugar under control by taking your medications, watching your diet, and monitoring your blood sugar level
- Exercise with your doctor's approval
- If you have high blood pressure, check your blood pressure regularly. Take your medications even if you feel fine
- Follow any special diet instructions

AL03016A 5/06

**Baxter**

**Baxter Healthcare Corporation**  
Renal Division  
1620 Waukegan Road  
McGaw Park, Illinois, 60085