

Take the #KidneyHealthChallenge!

Stress Reduction Sunday	Munchies Monday	Hydration Tuesday	Watch Out! Wednesday	Risk Factor Thursday	Kidney Fact Friday	Lifestyle Saturday
1  Shut mobile devices down 1 hr prior to bed for better rest	2  Add greens to smoothies	3  Keep hydrated on-the-go	4  One slice may contain up to 230 mg of sodium! Check your bread labels	5  High blood pressure is a risk factor- have yours checked!	6  Kidneys have a higher blood flow than the brain- exercise to keep the blood flowing	7  Walk somewhere you would normally drive to
8  Laugh! It can burn 4 lbs/year!	9  Replace a serving of red meat with beans or fish	10  Flavour your water with fruits and veggies	11  Watch for added sugar in "healthy" snacks	12  Know your family health history	13  Kidneys filter your entire blood supply every 30 mins- learn how OTC pills may affect them	14  Sing to release stress
15  Breathe deep	16  Get more veggies in- eat a meat-free meal	17  Eat more hydrating foods	18  Read labels to look for hidden fats	19  Quit smoking for better health	20  The body can work with one kidney. Register as an organ donor	21  Stretch daily for better posture and stress relief
22  Spend time with a pet or out in nature	23  Fill half of your dinner plate with veggies daily	24  Drink water with every snack and meal	25  Ditch diet sodas- they're linked to reduced kidney function	26  Find out if your ethnicity is high-risk: Asian, South Asian, Aboriginal, African & Filipino	27  The kidneys filter 2 quarts of urine a day- stay hydrated to help them out!	28  Swap your TV time for gym/active time
29  Give someone a hug- it reduces blood pressure	30  1 tsp each: dry mustard, paprika, garlic powder, onion powder 1.5 tsp: black pepper 1 tsp each: basil, thyme Make salt-free seasoning	31  Drink water before your morning coffee/tea	*Fluid and diet tips are not intended for kidney patients. If you have diagnosed kidney disease, please talk to your care team for advice.			

31 simple tips to help improve your kidney (and overall) health

kidneyhealthcheck.ca





Tips are not intended for patients
with diagnosed kidney disease.
Please talk to your care team.

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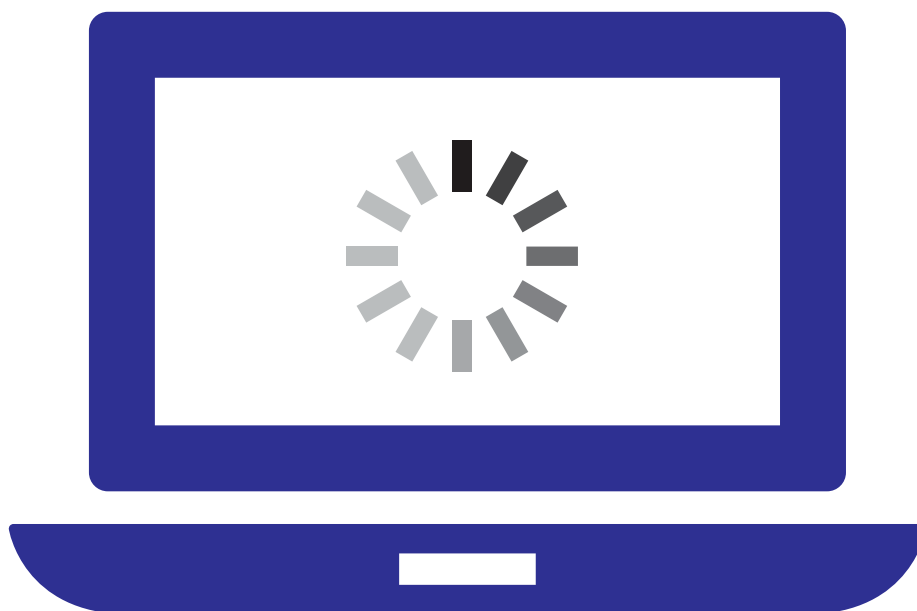
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Power Down

Good sleep plays a big role in maintaining your kidney health. The better rested we are, the less stressed we are which means our kidneys and adrenal systems are also less stressed. According to the National Sleep Foundation, studies have shown that having even a small electronic device (like a smartphone) on in the bedroom at night emits sufficient light to signal to the brain that it's "daytime" which then promotes wakefulness.

Today's challenge is to power down your mobile devices completely, at least one hour before bedtime to get a better night's sleep.

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Green smoothies

Eating well is essential for maintaining healthy kidneys.

Today, your challenge is to add greens to your smoothies for an extra boost of goodness. Try kale, spinach, cucumber or broccoli!



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Keep hydrated on the go

Your kidneys need lots of clean water to function properly, so keeping hydrated is essential, especially when you are on the go. When it comes to water, some of our choices include bottle, tap, filtered, and distilled. In Canada, we are lucky to have safe tap water to drink (with exception of when advisories are in place).

Today's challenge is to start a habit of carrying your reusable water bottle every time you leave the house.

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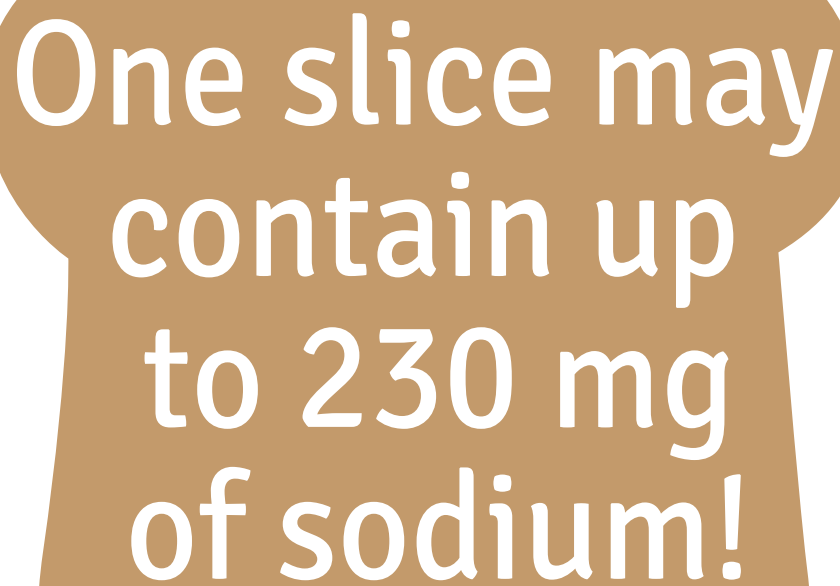
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One slice may
contain up
to 230 mg
of sodium!

Beware: hidden sodium

Bread can contain high amounts of sodium—one slice of white bread can have up to 230 milligrams!

Today's challenge is to read the label on your bread to see how much sodium it contains. Opt for a lower sodium bread to keep your sodium levels in check and your kidneys in good health.



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Medical conditions

Pre-existing health conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and high cholesterol increase your risk of developing kidney disease.

Today's challenge is to use our free online kidney assessment to find out if you're at risk. Visit [kidneysmart.com](https://www.kidneysmart.com).

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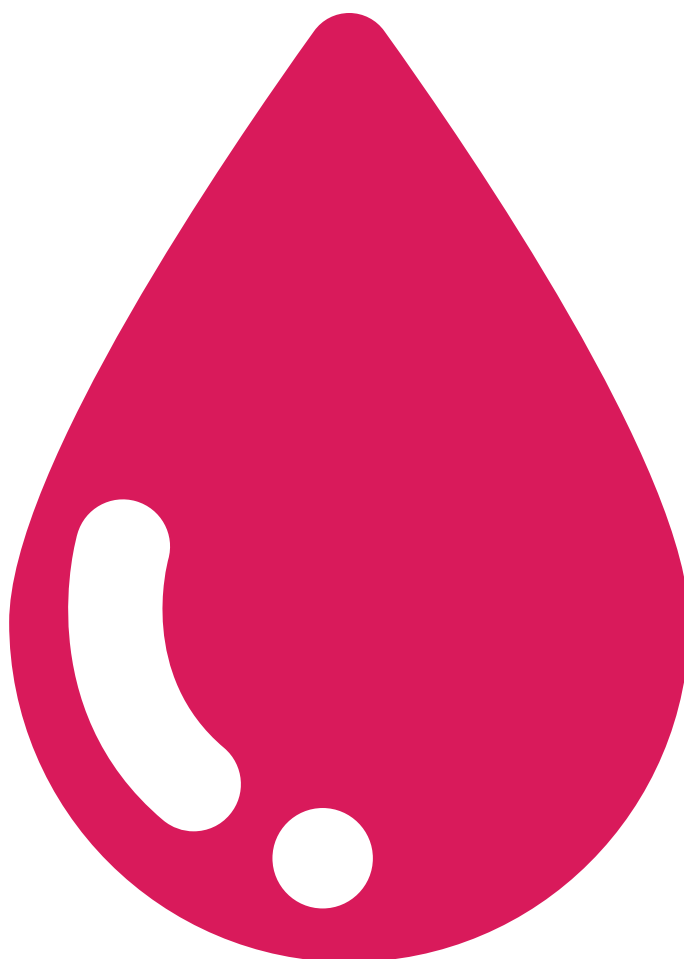
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Blood flow

Did you know? The kidneys have a higher blood flow than the brain, liver or heart.

Today's challenge is to keep the blood pumpin' by doing at least 30 minutes of exercise each day.

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Walk

Walking is a free, easy and enjoyable way to stay in shape. Here are some quick ways to enhance your weekend walk:

- Wear a weighted belt to burn more calories.
- Pull in your tummy for better posture.
- Get your stride right—your heel should hit the ground first, then roll through your arch and push off from your toes.

Today's challenge is to walk somewhere you'd usually drive to.

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Laugh

Fun fact: Children laugh about 300 times a day. Adults laugh about 15 to 100 times a day. Laughter is said to boost the immune system, plus 10-15 minutes of laughing burns 50 calories. You could lose up to 4 lbs a year just by having the giggles often!

Today your challenge is to give stress the boot by having a good laugh. Watch a hilarious show or film, or visit a comedy club!

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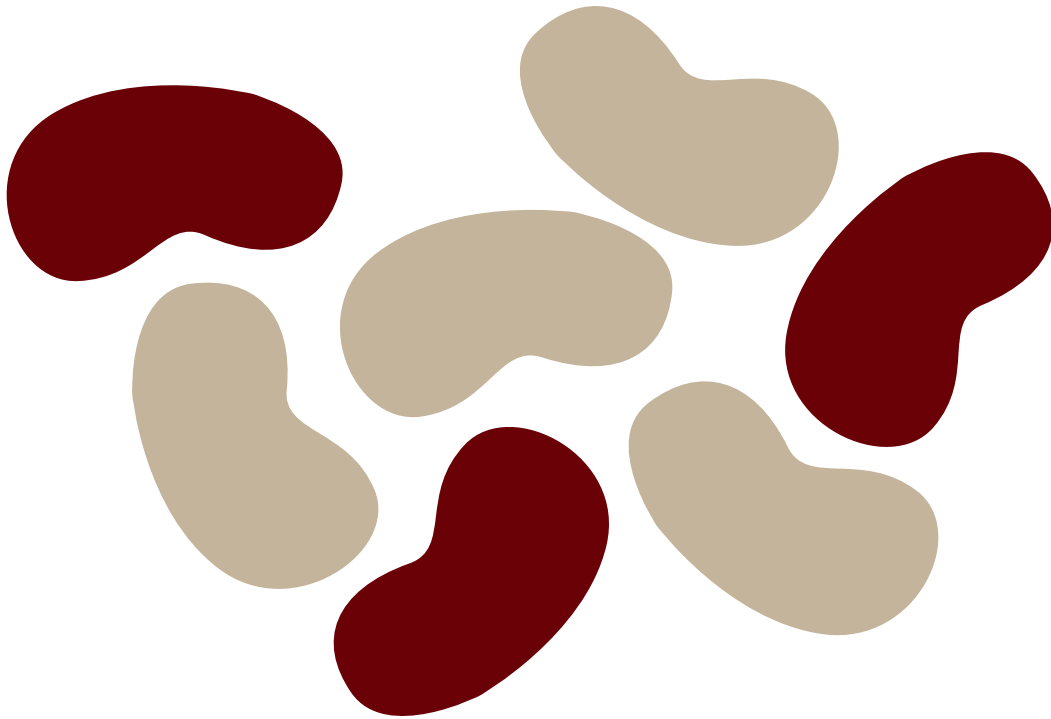
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Replace red meat

Cutting down on red meat will lower your risk of developing some types of cancer and heart disease.

Today's challenge is to cut down your red meat consumption and use a serving of fish, beans or a meat alternative like tofu or tempeh as a replacement.

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Invigorate your H₂O

Here are some delicious natural things you can add to your water if you're craving something different:

- cucumber slices
- fresh mint
- lemon and lime
- ginger
- herbal tea bag
- sliced strawberries
- cinnamon
- honey

Today's challenge is to ditch the drink mixes and flavor your water naturally from now on.

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Hidden sugar bombs

Beware of hidden sugar bombs in foods that are often considered "healthy". One example is dried fruit - some brands have added sugar listed as the second ingredient. Combined with the natural sugar found in dried fruit, this snack is a real sugar bomb!

Today's challenge is to check the labels on granola bars and other packaged snacks to keep your sugar intake in check.

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Know your health history

People with a family history of kidney disease have a higher risk of developing it themselves.

Today's challenge is to get to know your family's health history. Then check your risk level at [kidneysmart.com](https://www.kidneysmart.com).

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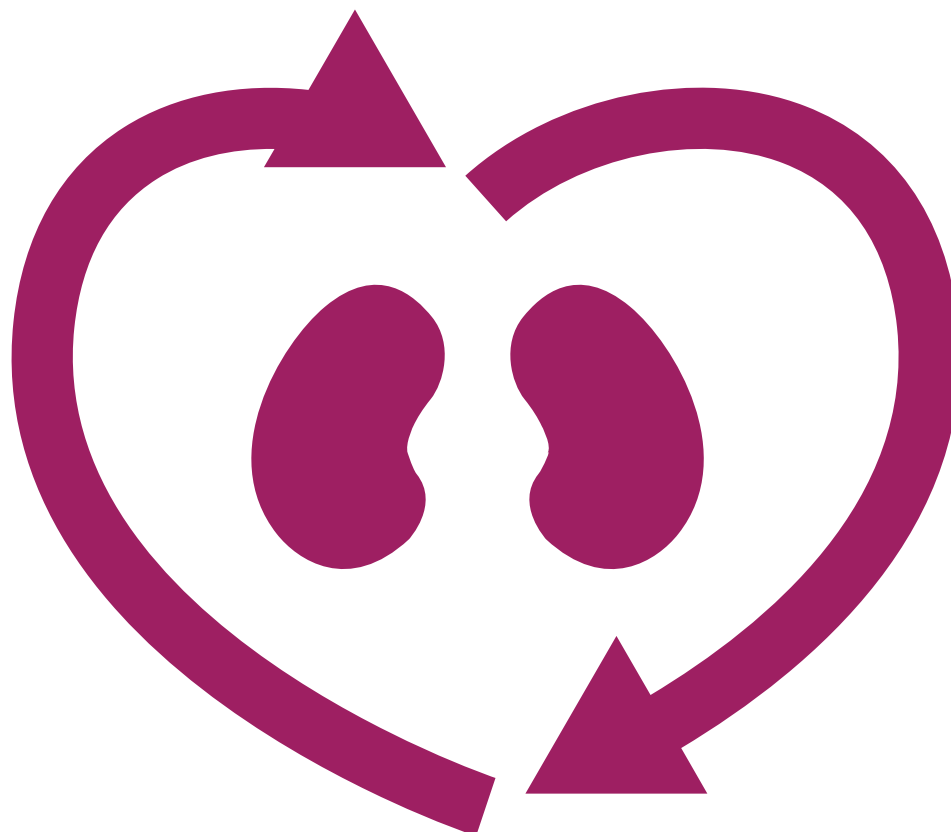
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Amazing filters

The kidneys are always working hard- in fact they filter your entire blood supply every 30 minutes. Some OTC (Over The Counter) medications can affect the kidneys however. According to The National Kidney Foundation, heavy or long-term use of some medicines such as ibuprofen, naproxen, and higher dose aspirin, can cause chronic kidney disease known as chronic interstitial nephritis.

Today's challenge is to ask your doctor how the medications you take regularly can affect your kidney function.

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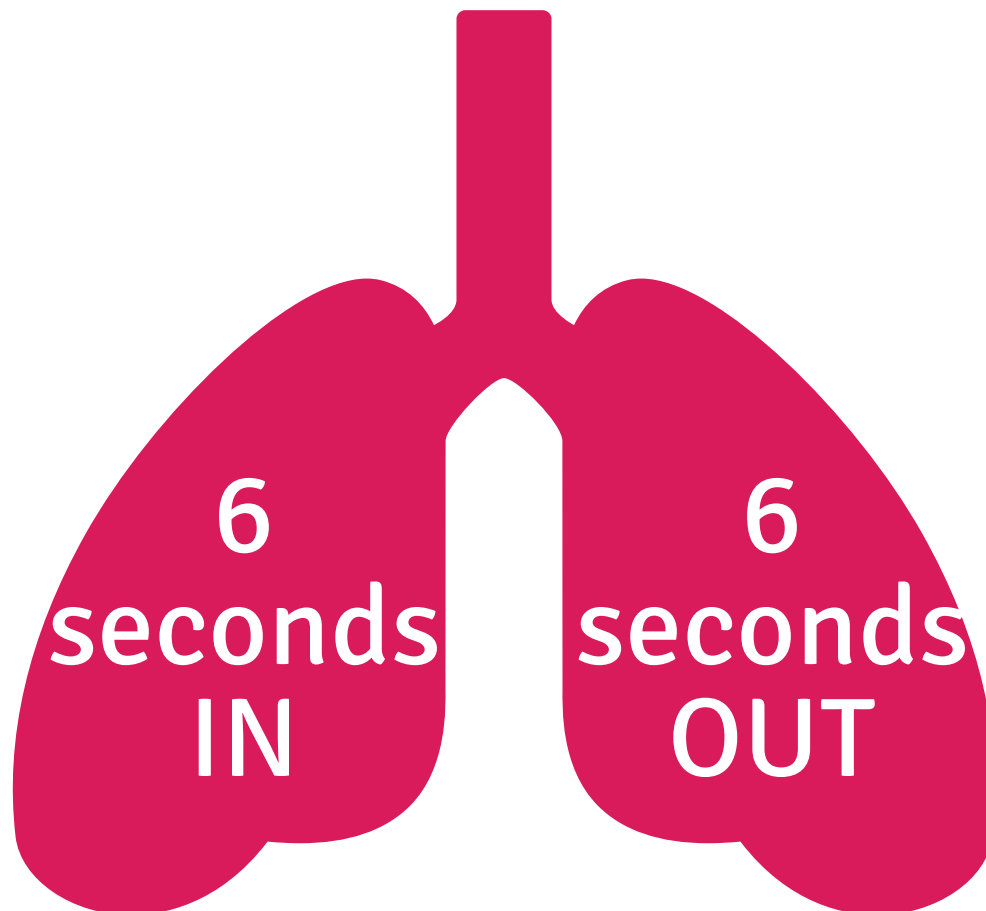
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Breathe deeply

Breathing is vital to good health, yet most of us don't pay enough attention to our breathing technique. Studies have shown that deep breathing can instantly calm your mind and body to promote a sense of well-being and relaxation.

Today's challenge is to try this easy breathing exercise: Inhale for six seconds, then exhale for six. If that's not comfortable, begin with shorter breaths and work your way up to six seconds.

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Sing a tune

When you're stressed out, sing! "Singing causes a dip in stress hormones", says Graham Welch, Ph.D. and chair of music education at the Institute of Education in London, "and it can also promote a greater sense of self-worth."

Today's challenge is to belt out your favourite tunes!

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Eat a meat-free meal

Get more veggies in by eating meat-free meals one day (or more!) a week. Get some delicious recipes from famous vegetarians like Paul McCartney on the meatfreemondays.com website.

Today's challenge is to serve up a veggie-heavy vegetarian or vegan dinner at least once a week.

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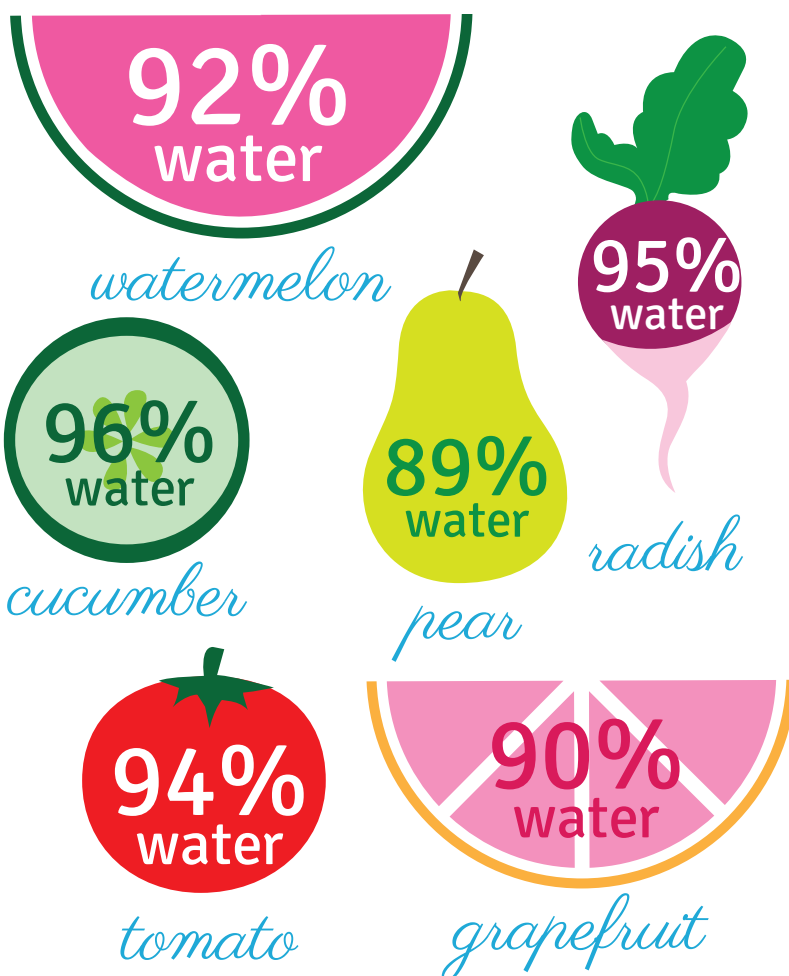
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Foods hydrate too!

Here's a list of some hydrating foods to include in your diet:

- cucumber = 96% water
- radish = 95% water
- celery = 95% water
- blueberries = 95% water
- tomato = 94% water
- watermelon = 92% water
- grapefruit = 90% water
- pear = 89% water

Today's challenge is to include these refreshing, hydrating foods in your snacks and meals throughout the day.

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Beware: hidden fats

Hidden fats in packaged food is common—even in snacks that are considered healthy.

Today's challenge is to read the label to find out if your food contains added fats like palm oil and partially hydrogenated oil.

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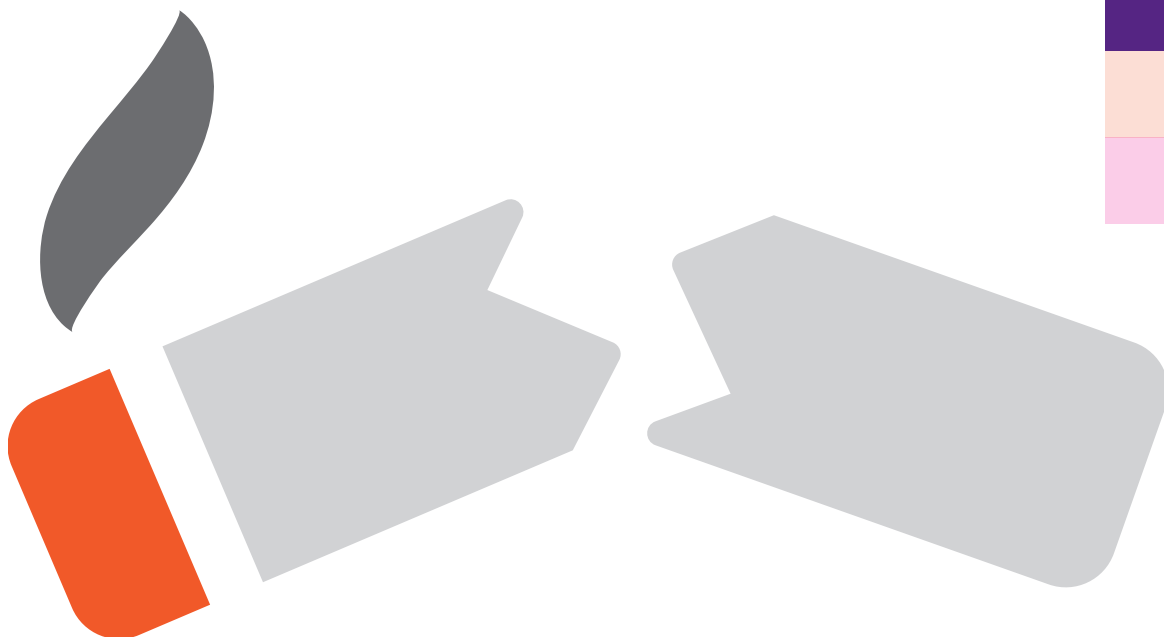
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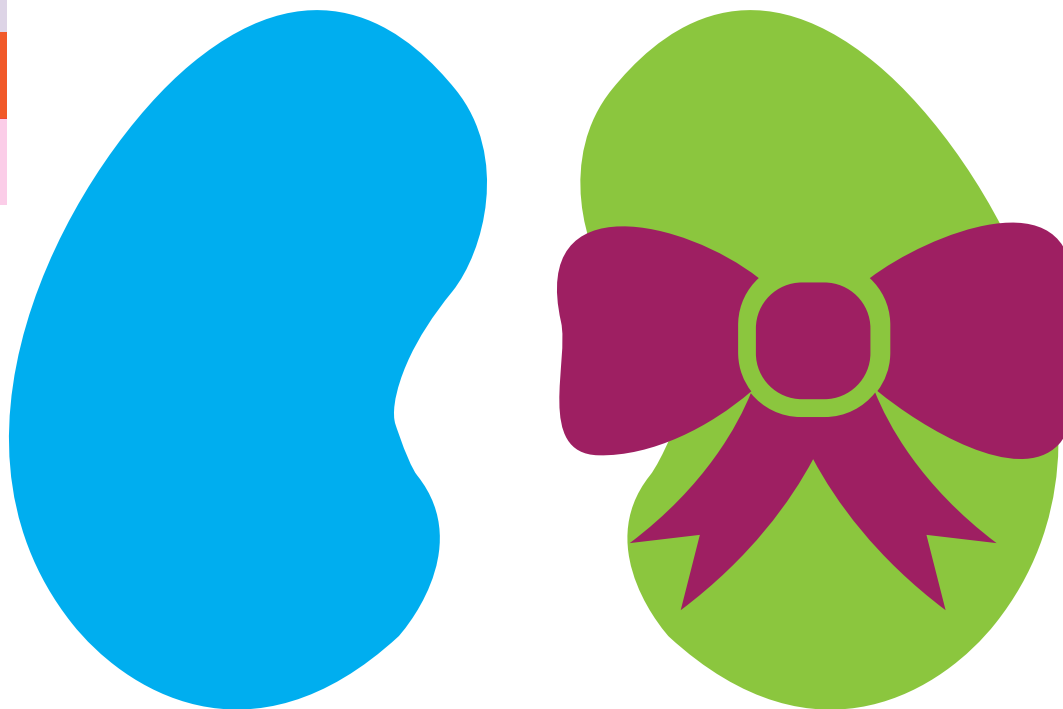


Quit smoking

Smoking increases your risk of kidney disease amongst other things. Break the habit for better health.

Today's challenge (for smokers) is to start the quitting process. If you need help, visit quitnow.ca. Non smokers: your challenge is to avoid second-hand smoke, including from electronic cigarettes.

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Have a spare?

Did you know? The body can work with one kidney. And, living kidney donors lead normal healthy lives after donating.

Today's challenge is to sign up at as an organ donor in your area and give the gift of life. For residents of British Columbia, sign up on the BC Transplant website: <https://register.transplant.bc.ca/>

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Stretch

Stretching every day can improve your posture and flexibility, and lower your stress levels. Doing yoga is just one way to stretch and strengthen your body. If you don't have time to do a class, learn a few basic postures to add to your daily stretch routine.

Today's challenge is to learn a few good poses to add to your morning routine such as the Downward Dog, Cobra, Cat, Cow and Child's Pose.

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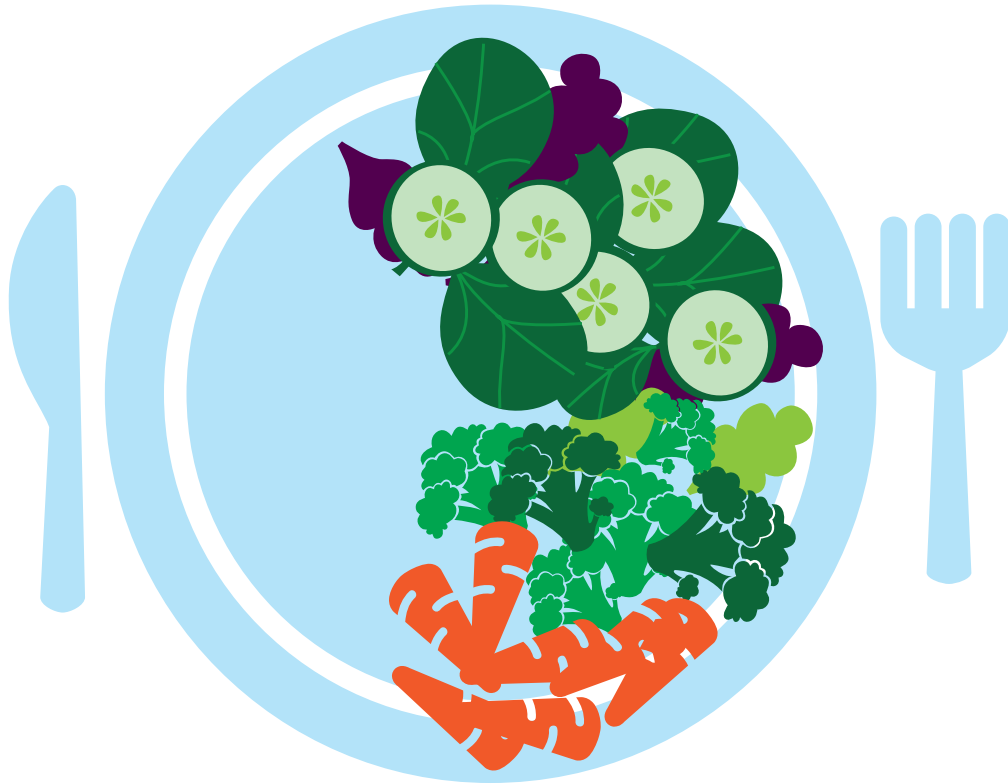
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Furry friends

Studies have shown that spending time with a beloved pet reduces stress levels and promotes a sense of well-being.

Your challenge today is to spend time with a furry friend. If you don't own a pet, go outside and listen to the birds sing or feed the ducks. Volunteering is another way to be around animals - animal shelters are always in need of helping hands!



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Half a plate of veggies

Not sure if you are eating enough veggies? The Dietitians of Canada recommend filling half your plate with vegetables at dinner.

Today's challenge is to start eating half a plate of veggies every day at dinner.

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Make it a habit

Most of us struggle to keep hydrated throughout the day.

Today's challenge is to get into the habit of drinking water with every snack and meal to increase your fluid intake.

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Avoid diet soda

Diet sodas may be low in calories, but they aren't good for your kidneys. In an 11-year-long Harvard Medical School study of more than 3,000 women, researchers found that diet cola is associated with a two-fold increased risk for kidney decline. Kidney function started declining when women drank more than two diet sodas a day.

Today's challenge is to ditch diet sodas for good!

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Ethnicity

People who are of Asian, South Asian, Aboriginal, African, Hispanic and Pacific Islander descent have a higher risk of developing kidney disease.

Today's challenge is to see if your ethnic background puts you at a higher risk. Take our free online assessment at [kidneysmart.com](https://www.kidneysmart.com).

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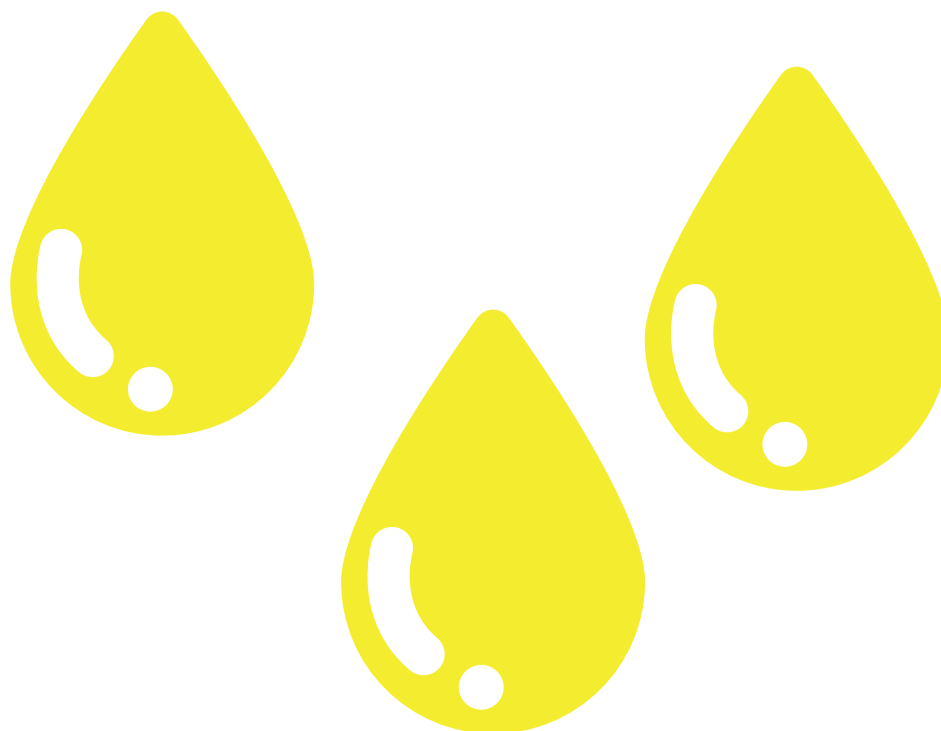
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Urine

Did you know? The kidneys filter approximately 2 quarts of urine per day.

Today's challenge is to help your kidneys out by drinking plenty of fluids each day.

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Turn off the TV

Reduce your TV time - especially at dinner. According to Eliot Blass at the University of Massachusetts, people eat between 31% and 74% more calories while watching TV.

Today's challenge is to swap your TV time for gym or active time.

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Hug

Fun fact: Hugging has been shown to reduce blood pressure—one of the risk factors in developing kidney disease.

Today's challenge is to give someone a hug!

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Ditch the table salt

Make your own #kidneysmart seasoning out of dried herbs and spices:

1 tbsp each of:

- dry mustard
- paprika
- garlic powder
- onion powder

1 tsp each of:

- basil
- thyme

1.5 tsp of:

- black pepper

Today's challenge is to ditch the table salt and use homemade, natural seasonings on your food instead.

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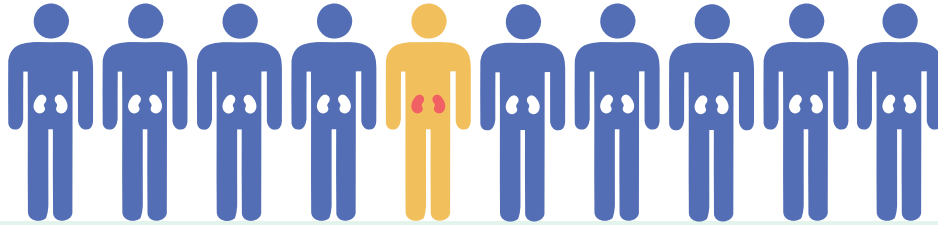


Hydrate first thing

We're usually dehydrated in the morning, so a glass of H₂O to start the day will replenish your fluids. It can also help curb your appetite and flush out toxins.

Today's challenge is to start the day off with a glass or two of water before your morning coffee or tea.

1/10 British Columbians are affected by kidney disease.
MANY DON'T EVEN KNOW IT.






Check your kidney health online: kidneyhealthcheck.ca

Produced for Kidney Health Awareness month, World Kidney Day and KidneySmart.com by:



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