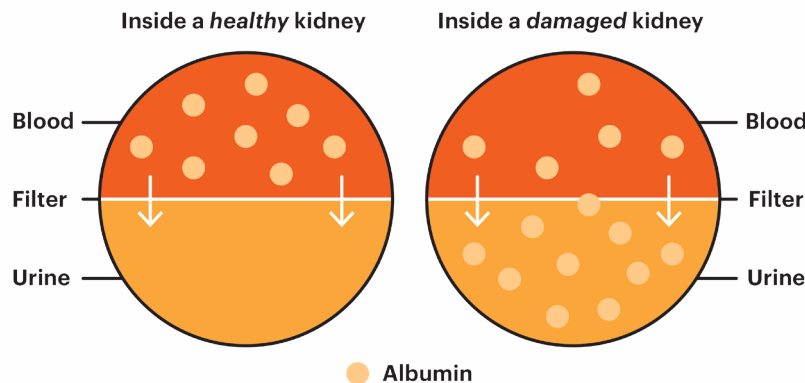


Albumin is a type of protein that is normally found in the blood. Your body needs protein. It is an important nutrient that helps build muscle, repair tissue, and fight infection. But it should be in your blood, not your urine. When you have albumin (protein) in your urine, it is called albuminuria or proteinuria.

### About kidney disease and albuminuria/proteinuria

One of the main jobs of your kidneys is to filter your blood. Your kidneys keep important things your body needs, like protein, in your blood. They also remove things your body doesn't need, like waste products and extra water.



If your kidneys are healthy, you should have very little or no protein in your urine. But if your kidneys are damaged, protein can leak out of the kidneys into your urine. Having protein in your urine may be an early sign of kidney disease but it can also be due to other reasons.

## Diagnosing albuminuria/proteinuria

Diagnosing albuminuria/proteinuria is easy to do since only a simple urine test is needed, which is often part of a routine exam. You will be asked to pee into a clean cup called a *specimen cup*. Only a small amount of your urine is needed (about two tablespoons) to do the test.

Some of the urine is tested right away with a dipstick — a thin, plastic strip that is placed in the urine. The rest is looked at under a microscope and sent to a laboratory, where a test called an uACR (urine albumin-to-creatinine ratio) is done. A uACR shows whether you have albumin in your urine. A normal amount of albumin in your urine is less than 30 mg/g.

## Albuminuria/proteinuria and kidney disease

If your tests for albuminuria/proteinuria are positive, you may be developing kidney disease, but your doctor will likely want to check you again to make sure albuminuria is not caused by something else, like being dehydrated due to not drinking enough water. If your doctor suspects that you have kidney disease, the test for albumin will be repeated. Three positive results over 3 months or more is a sign of kidney disease.



*Having a simple urine test can help find kidney disease and other health conditions early. Finding kidney disease early is important because treatment can help keep it from getting worse. It may even make some problems better. If you have questions or need more information about albuminuria/proteinuria, speak to your doctor or other healthcare professional.*

**For more information, contact the National Kidney Foundation**

Toll-free help line: **855.NKF.CARES** or email: **[nkfcare@kidney.org](mailto:nkfcare@kidney.org)**

## Treatments for albuminuria/proteinuria and kidney disease

If your uACR tests confirm that you have kidney disease, it's likely you will be given a treatment plan to follow. Your treatment plan will be based on many things, including the cause of your kidney disease, how much kidney function you have, and whether you have other health problems. It may include taking medicine, changing your diet, limiting salt, getting exercise, and more.

### Your doctor may also want you to have:

- **Imaging tests.** (An ultrasound or CT scan). This test produces a picture of your kidneys and urinary tract. It can show whether your kidneys have kidney stones or other problems.
- **Kidney biopsy.** This test can help find out what caused your kidney disease and how much damage to the kidneys has already happened.