

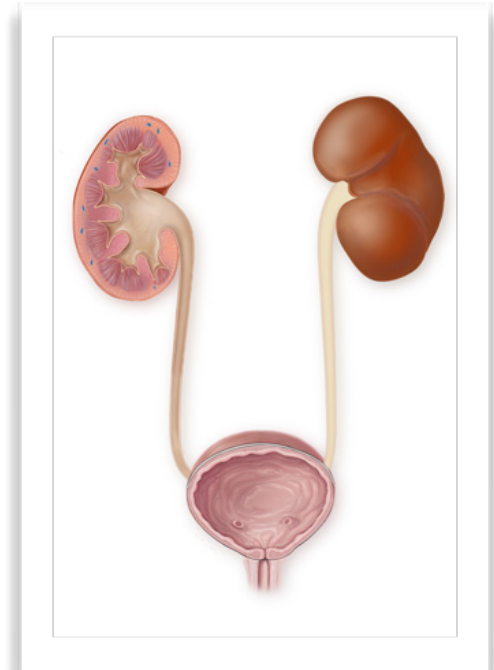


What is kidney pain?

People often mistake kidney pain as back pain.

Unlike back pain, which usually occurs in the lower back, kidney pain is deeper and higher up the back. The kidneys can be found underneath the ribcage, on each side of the spine. Pain from the kidneys is felt in the sides, or in the middle to upper back (most often under the ribs, to the right or left of the spine). The pain may also progress to other areas, such as the abdomen or groin.

Kidney pain is a result of swelling or blockage in the kidneys or urinary tract. Other symptoms such as fever, vomiting, or painful urination are clues that the pain is a result of a kidney problem.



What are possible causes of kidney pain?

Because the kidneys filter the blood, form urine, and pass it out of the body through tubes called ureters, problems in any of these areas could result in pain. Some of the more common causes of kidney pain include:

- **Kidney stones:** Kidney stones form from the buildup of minerals or chemical wastes inside the body. Stones may be as small as a grain of sand or larger than a pearl. If they are small they may pass out of the body. However, larger stones may get stuck in the urinary tract and prevent urine from passing. In either case, intense pain can result.

- **Musculo Skeletal Pain:** Pain near the location of kidney can be due to muscular spasm and fibromyalgia. It is not necessary due to tiny calyceal calculus.
- **Urinary tract infection:** An infection anywhere along the urinary tract caused by bacteria left behind after urination. Symptoms may include fever, painful urination, cloudy urine, and general fatigue.

When should I visit my doctor?

See your doctor if you have persistent pain in the kidney area, and if you have back pain along with any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Discolored urine
- Painful urination
- Blood in the urine
- A repeated urgent need to urinate
- The appearance of solid material (kidney stones) in the urine
- A general feeling of illness or lethargy that will not go away

- **Kidney infection (pyelonephritis):** A kidney infection occurs when bacteria from a bladder infection has spread to the kidneys. People with diabetes or who have a blockage in the urinary tract are more likely to get a kidney infection. In chronic cases, some problem in the urinary tract causes urine to flow backwards from the bladder up to the kidneys, resulting in repeated infections and possibly permanent kidney damage.
- **Polycystic kidney disease:** An inherited condition in which fluid-filled sacs (cysts) develop inside the kidneys. As the cysts expand,

the kidneys become enlarged and may eventually lose their ability to function.

- **Injury or trauma:** Any strong impact or blunt force to the kidney area (such as in contact sports or an accident) may cause a laceration or other physical damage to the kidneys. Such incidents may also cause a disruption of normal blood flow to the kidneys. Acute (sudden) kidney failure may result from kidney trauma.
- **Kidney (renal) cancer:** Renal cell carcinoma is the most common type of kidney cancer. It usually affects people in their 60s or 70s, rarely appearing in those under the age of 50. If they occur at all, symptoms include blood in the urine, a persistent pain in the back or side just below the ribs, and a lump or swelling in the side.