

Feeding your baby or child with chronic kidney disease

Overview

This infoKID topic is for parents and carers about children's kidney conditions.

This leaflet has the overview only.

Go to www.infoKID.org.uk to find out more about this topic or other topics

This information is designed to help parents and carers feeding a baby or child with chronic kidney disease.

It should be used alongside specialist advice from individual healthcare professionals.



About chronic kidney disease and feeding

The kidneys filter blood and remove extra water, salt and waste in urine. However, babies and children with chronic kidney disease (CKD) have poor kidney function – their kidneys do not work as well as they should.

It is important that your baby or child with CKD feeds or eats well. Good nutrition is essential for their growth and healthy brain development. It gives them strength to fight illness and infections.

Some children with CKD struggle with eating. They will need extra support to make sure they get the energy and nutrients they need to grow and stay healthy.

» Chronic kidney disease (CKD) – an introduction

About your child's care

Your child will probably be referred to a paediatric renal unit, a specialised unit that treats babies, children and young people with kidney conditions and may be in a different hospital from the one you would normally visit.

The renal team, a group of healthcare professionals who specialise in treating and caring for babies, children and young people with kidney conditions, will support you and your family. The team will include:

- A **paediatric nephrologist** – a specialist doctor who treats children with kidney problems.
- A **paediatric renal dietitian** – a healthcare professional who advises on what to feed your child to help control the effects of poor kidney function, and to ensure your child thrives.

Feeding your baby

Babies need to go through stages of feeding. This starts with milk. Breast milk is best for most babies, but some will need a special formula milk. They then move on to solid foods, often starting with pureed (mashed up) foods, and then on to lumpy foods. This is called weaning.

Your baby's healthcare team will check that he or she is getting enough milk or food to meet his or her needs.

Coping with feeding problems

Some babies and children with CKD struggle with feeding or eating. Children are more likely to be happy feeders if they sense that their parent is calm and relaxed.

You may wish to talk to someone – a family member, friend or healthcare professional – to help manage your anxiety away from your child. This will help you to stay calm and in control, without leaving you feeling that you will raise your voice or force feed your child.

Feeding devices

Some babies and children cannot eat and drink the amount they need for their growth and development. If needed, they can be fed through a tube.

All or some of their nutrition – and water and medicines, if needed – can be given through a nasogastric tube, a gastrostomy tube or gastrostomy button.

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Your notes and contact information

www.infoKID.org.uk



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For details on any sources of information used in this topic, please contact us through our website www.infoKID.org.uk.

We take great care to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct and up-to-date. However, it is important that you ask the advice of your child's doctor or nurse if you are not sure about something. This information is intended for use in the United Kingdom, and may not apply to other countries.

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