

Third of over-75s unaware they have chronic kidney disease

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Credit: University College London

Over one-third of people aged over 75 show evidence of having severe chronic kidney disease, according to research from UCL published this week in the latest NHS Digital Health Survey for England. By comparison, only 5 per cent of adults of that age reported that they had been diagnosed with chronic kidney disease by a doctor.

A total of 8,011 adults and 2,056 children took part in the Health Survey for England 2016 which monitors trends in the nation's health and covers a variety of topics each year including obesity, smoking and drinking and wellbeing. The surveys have been carried out since 1994 by UCL and NatCen Social Research.

"It is very worrying that so many people have evidence of chronic kidney disease but don't know about it. One in 20 adults aged 75+ reported a diagnosis of chronic kidney disease. But when we tested their blood and [urine samples](#), we found that over one-third of people this age had evidence of severe [chronic kidney disease](#) (stage 3 to 5)", said Professor Jennifer Mindell (UCL Institute of Epidemiology & Health), and co-editor of the [report](#).

"The good news is that more people with [high blood pressure](#) are being diagnosed and treated effectively, which will reduce their risk of future kidney disease. The bad news is that diabetes, the other major cause of kidney [disease](#), continues to increase because so many people are obese."

The survey, which involved a team of researchers from UCL's Institute of Epidemiology and Health including Alison Moody, Dr Linda Ng Fat and Dr Shaun Scholes, also provided data on physical activity, mental health and well-being and prescribed medicines.

"Overall, we found that people living in more deprived areas still have worse [health](#) than those in more affluent areas. If more people were more physically active, the need for prescribed medicines could be reduced. It would also be better for the population and the environment, and probably cheaper, to design streets that encourage and enable people to walk and cycle instead of drive." added Professor Mindell.

Provided by University College London

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