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**Two minutes to avoid a silent killer**

Kidney related disease kills more Australians each year than breast cancer, prostate cancer and road accidents combined, yet awareness of this silent killer remains low.

During **World Kidney Day (March 12)** Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service Director Renal Services, Dr Nick Gray, is urging everyone to see if they are at increased risk of developing chronic kidney disease.

“Early diagnosis and the correct management can often prevent kidney damage from becoming worse and reduce the risk of kidney failure. Sometimes the progress of the disease can be slowed by diet changes and medication,” Dr Gray said.

“Chronic kidney disease often has very few symptoms, or non-specific symptoms, such as tiredness, loss of appetite, nausea and generally feeling unwell. Many people can lose up to 90 per cent of their kidneys’ function before experiencing any symptoms. This is why it is often referred to as the silent killer.”

Australians at risk of developing chronic kidney disease include those who have diabetes, high blood pressure are obese, smoke, have a history of previous kidney injury, are older than 60, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Kidney disease may also run in families.

Dr Gray said: “World Kidney Day is more than just raising awareness about prevention and early detection. It is also important to shine a light on the need for equitable and quality kidney care for all Australians.

“People living outside major cities in Australia, or who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, experience poorer outcomes from kidney disease. We need to achieve equitable access to quality care for people regardless of their circumstances. One step has been increases in kidney specialists working in regional and rural areas.”

If you are not sure if you’re in a high-risk group you can take Kidney Health Australia’s online Kidney Risk Test, it takes a couple of minutes and could save your life.

To take the test to find out if you are at an increased risk of developing chronic kidney disease, and for more information on kidney health, visit [www.kidney.org.au](http://www.kidney.org.au).

**ENDS**

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