

Diseases And Conditions



Question: How do glomerular diseases interfere with kidney function?

Answer: Glomerular diseases damage the glomeruli, letting protein and sometimes red blood cells leak into the urine. Sometimes a glomerular disease also interferes with the clearance of waste products by the kidney, so they begin to build up in the blood. Furthermore, loss of blood proteins like albumin in the urine can result in a fall in their level in the bloodstream. In normal blood, albumin acts like a sponge, drawing extra fluid from the body into the bloodstream, where it remains until the kidneys remove it. But when albumin leaks into the urine, the blood loses its capacity to absorb extra fluid from the body. Fluid can accumulate outside the circulatory system in the face, hands, feet, or ankles and cause swelling. **What are the symptoms of glomerular disease?** The signs and symptoms of glomerular disease include

- **albuminuria:** large amounts of protein in the urine
- **hematuria:** blood in the urine
- **reduced glomerular filtration rate:** inefficient filtering of wastes from the blood
- **hypoproteinemia:** low blood protein
- **edema:** swelling in parts of the body

One or more of these symptoms can be the first sign of kidney disease. But how would you know, for example, whether you have proteinuria? Before seeing a

doctor, you may not. But some of these symptoms have signs, or visible manifestations:

- Proteinuria may cause foamy urine.
- Blood may cause the urine to be pink or cola-colored.
- Edema may be obvious in hands and ankles, especially at the end of the day, or around the eyes when awakening in the morning, for example.