

# Kidney Cancer Diagnosis

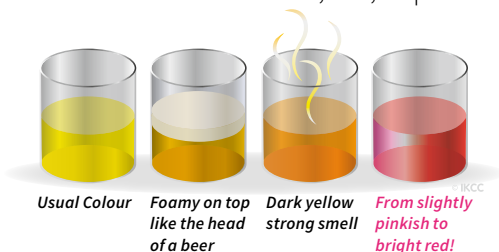


## How do you find if you have kidney cancer?

Most kidney cancers do not cause symptoms. Currently, there are no screening tests for kidney cancer. Doctors use their clinical experience, scans, and other tests to diagnose kidney cancer. Your doctor may use different tests depending on which signs and symptoms you have.

If you notice a change in your body that isn't normal for you, or if you have any of the signs and symptoms of kidney cancer, you should make an appointment to see your family doctor. Some of the more common signs and symptoms of kidney cancer are:

- Blood in your urine (haematuria) or a change in colour to dark brown, red, or pink.



- Pain in your lower back, stomach or side which is not linked to an injury.
- Unexplained weight loss.
- Newly developed high blood pressure.
- Constant tiredness.
- Persistent unexplained cough.

If you are worried about your symptoms, please don't delay seeing your doctor. These symptoms might not be cancer, but the earlier cancer is found, the easier it is to treat.

Depending on your symptoms, your doctor might do a general physical examination, listen to your heart, and arrange for you to give blood and urine samples. After your examination, your doctor might refer you to hospital for further tests.

Around half of all cases of kidney cancer are found when you are being checked for a different medical problem, such as a urine infection, liver problems or gut problems. In these cases, the tests detailed below will be followed.

## The most common tests for kidney cancer

### Laboratory tests

Your blood and urine samples will be sent to the laboratory to check your general health and whether your liver and kidneys are working properly.

### CT scan

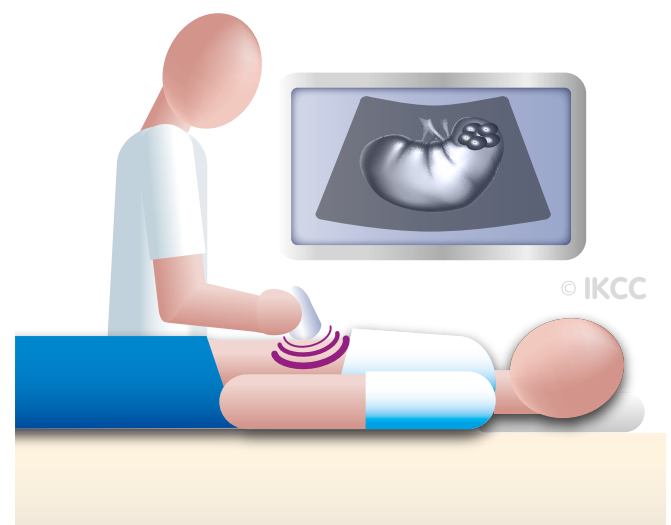
A computerised tomography (CT) scan is a special type of x-ray to take pictures of the inside of your body. If you have a tumour, it can be used to check the size of the tumour and whether it has spread to other parts of your body. This test is carried out by a radiologist.

### MRI scan

Like a CT scan, a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan takes picture of the inside of your body but uses a magnet instead of x-rays. If you have a tumour, an MRI scan is used to check the size of the tumour, and whether it has spread to other parts of the body. This test is carried out by a radiologist.

### Ultrasound scan

An ultrasound scan uses a probe and sound waves to form pictures of the inside your body and to look for any abnormalities. This test is carried out by a radiologist.



Ultrasound

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If the doctor finds a tumour and thinks it may be kidney cancer, you might have some of the following tests to find out more about your cancer:

## **Bone scan**

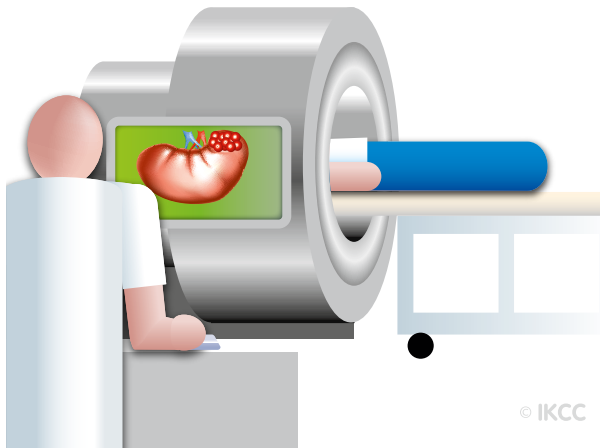
You might have a bone scan to see if there is any damage to your bones caused by the cancer spreading.

## **Brain scan**

If you are having severe headaches, disturbed vision, or problems with your balance, you might have a CT or MRI scan to see if your cancer has spread to your brain.

## **Biopsy**

Biopsy is the removal of a small amount of tissue using a fine needle through the skin. The tissue is examined under a microscope by a doctor called a pathologist to check for signs of cancer.



CT-Scan

## **What happens next?**

If tests show there is a strong suspicion that you have kidney cancer, your doctor might recommend surgery to remove the tumour without you having a biopsy. Sometimes, you might have a biopsy to get more information about the tumour before you have any treatment. In about 20-30% of cases, the kidney tumour is found to be benign (not cancer).



## **Good to know!**

### **Radiologist**

A doctor who specialises in diagnosing disease using x-rays, ultrasound scans, CT scans and MRI scans.

### **Biopsy**

The removal of a small amount of cells or tissue that is looked at under a microscope by a pathologist to check for abnormalities.

### **Pathologist**

A doctor who identifies diseases by studying cells and tissues under a microscope.

### **Surgery**

A procedure to remove or repair a part of the body or to find out whether disease is present.

### **Symptom**

An indication that a person has a condition or disease. Some examples of symptoms are headache, fever, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, and pain.

### **Distributed by:**