

HEALTH REPORT

www.healthreport.com.au

MEDIA RELEASE

POLL SHOWS KIDNEY DISEASE TIMEBOMB TICKING IN BABY BOOMERS

Australia's ageing population and the ever-present risk factors of smoking, high blood pressure and diabetes are poised to spark an explosion of kidney disease in baby boomers, a new poll reveals.

The warning signs are in national polling of 1700 people for the latest Pfizer Australia Health Report, released today.

It shows 17 percent of households contain someone with kidney or urinary tract problems, yet a staggering 42 percent of respondents are unaware that these diseases are mostly preventable.

High blood pressure, diabetes and smoking are key risk factors for kidney disease - and the poll shows sharp rises in two of these as people pass the age of 50.

The incidence of people reporting high blood pressure soars from just four percent in the under 30 age group to 34 percent in the over 50s.

And although just one percent of people under 30 say they have diabetes, this climbs to 12 percent after people enter their 50s.

The good news is that smoking declines as people age, falling from 25 percent in the under 30s to just 13 percent for people aged over 50.

"But by then, the damage may already have been done," says Kidney Health Australia Chief Executive Officer Anne Wilson, whose organisation partnered with research-based health care company, Pfizer Australia, to commission the poll.

"These results are worrying but not surprising. They spell trouble for our ageing population and underline the need for all of us to adopt healthier lifestyles."

Some 51 percent of people confessed to having little or no knowledge of maintaining good urinary tract health. Almost as many (44 percent) say they have little or no knowledge of how to keep their kidneys healthy.



HEALTH REPORT

www.healthreport.com.au

"The paradox is that 84 percent of people said they were interested, or very interested, in good urinary tract and kidney health," Ms Wilson said.

Other significant findings:

- People in regional areas were more likely than metropolitan respondents to admit to having major risk factors like smoking (23 percent versus 18 percent), high blood pressure (22 percent vs 16 percent) or diabetes (nine percent vs six percent);
- Women were more likely than men to have good knowledge of maintaining kidney health (53 percent vs. 45 percent) and urinary tract health (47 percent vs 35 percent).
- White-collar occupation groups had better knowledge about kidney health (52 percent) than blue-collar occupation groups (43 percent).

Copies of the Pfizer Australia Health Report can be requested free-of-charge by calling 1800 675 229. People can sign-up to receive future editions by email at www.healthreport.com.au. Alternatively the current edition can be requested electronically by sending an SMS, with the word PFIZER followed by an email address, to 0429 444 777.

Designed by Kidney Health Australia, the study was a self-completion survey involving 1775 people (living in 695 households) aged 16 years and over, conducted by independent consultant Stollznow Research. Participants were recruited by telephone and the surveys were completed in October and November 2003.

For more information or interviews, please contact:

Linda Reid (m: 0417 800 996) or Alexandra Campbell (m: 0412 200 944) at Hausmann Communications on (02) 9361 3777 or Craig Regan, Pfizer Australia Media Affairs Manager on 0408 448 527