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kidneys and heart

# Learn more about hyperkalaemia and potassium level in the body

What is hyperkalaemia and how it relates to your heart and kidneys.

## Kidney Care UK

High potassium levels (hyperkalaemia) and kidney disease

[Kidney Care UK](#)



## Kidney Research UK

What is hyperkalaemia (high potassium)?

[Kidney Research UK](#)



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Heart Failure guide

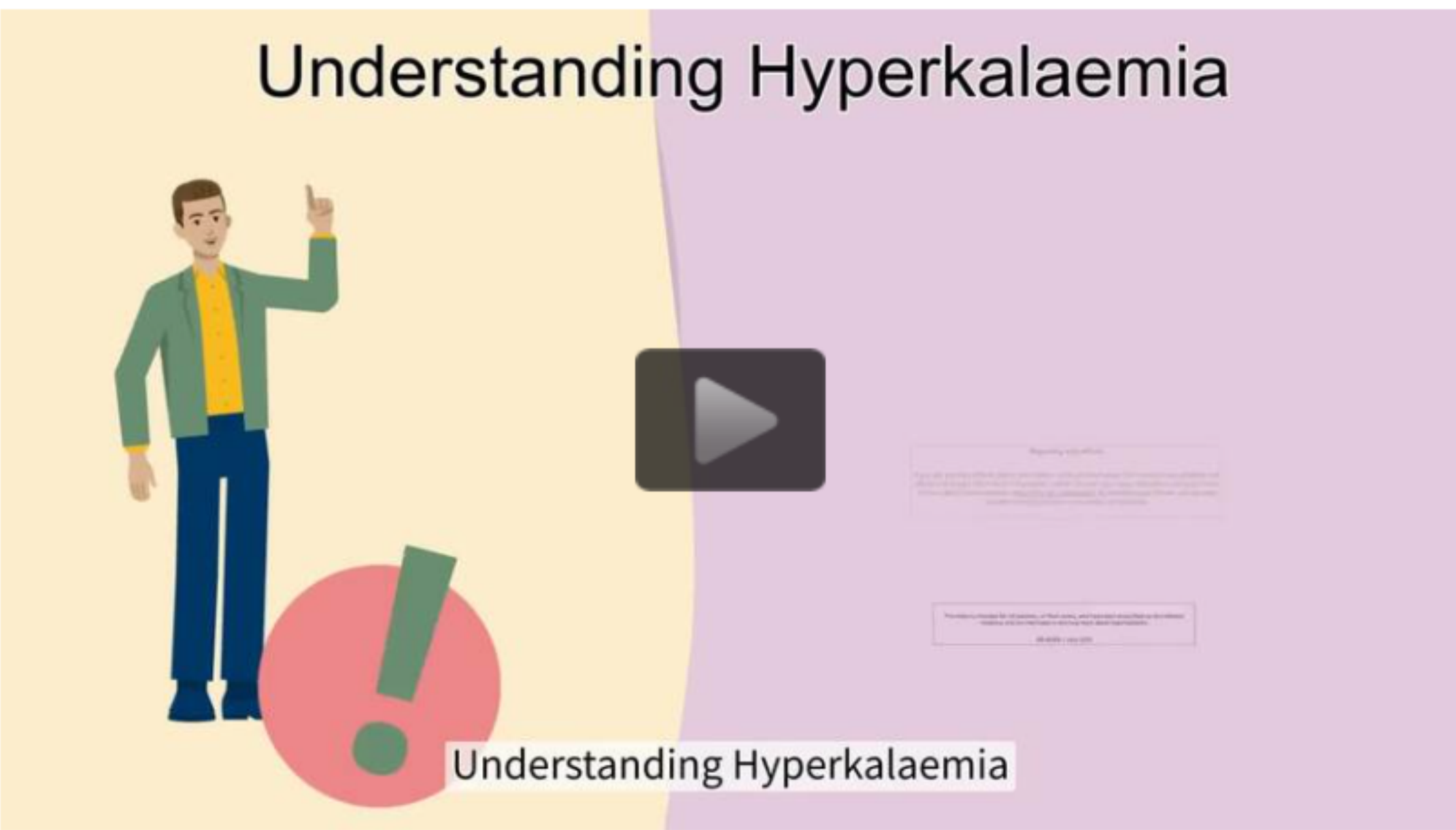
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## National Kidney Federation

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This video is for patients who are interested in learning more about hyperkalaemia.

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- Adult (18 years+)
- Hyperkalaemia (high blood potassium)

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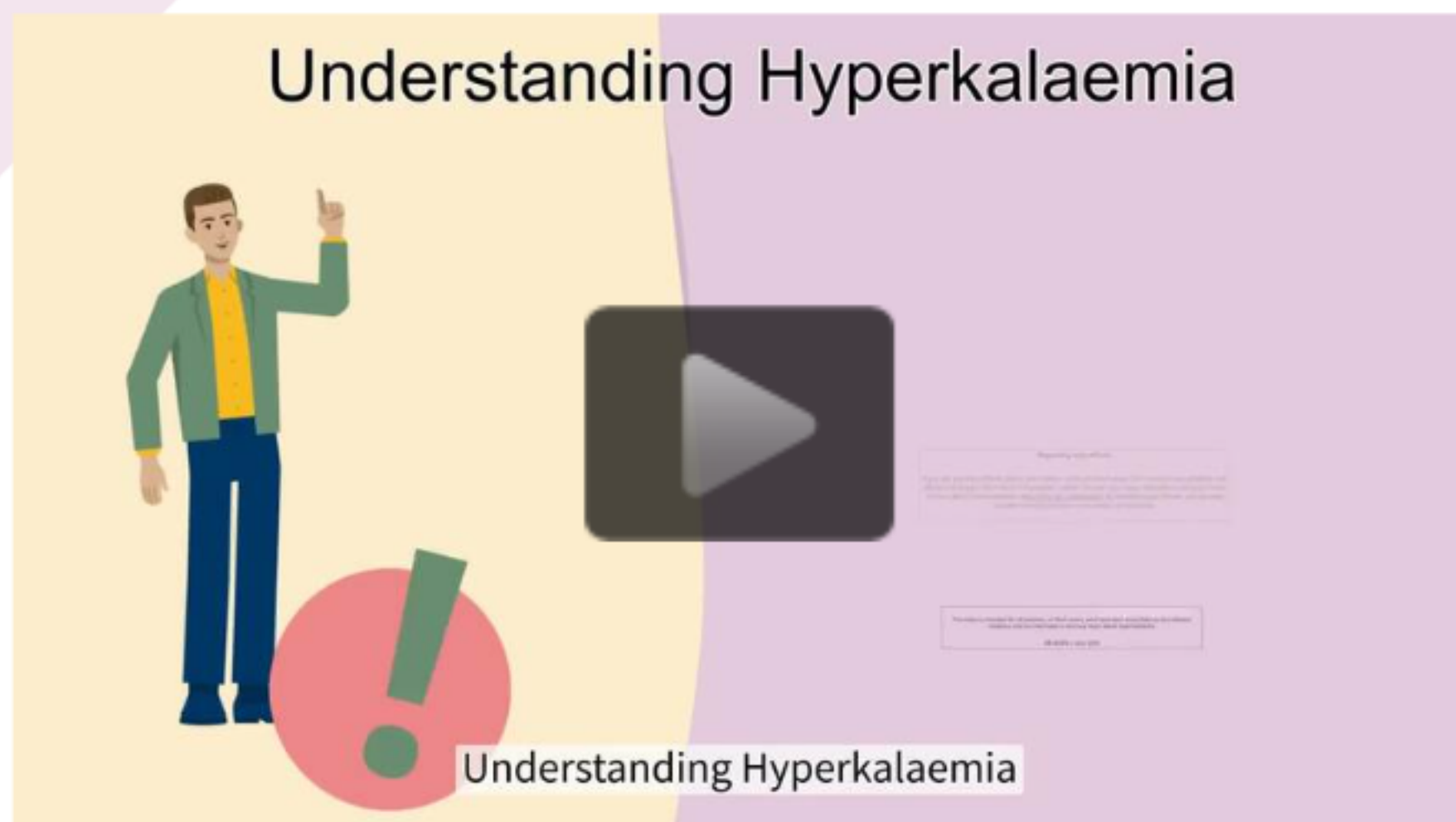
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## Understanding Hyperkalaemia



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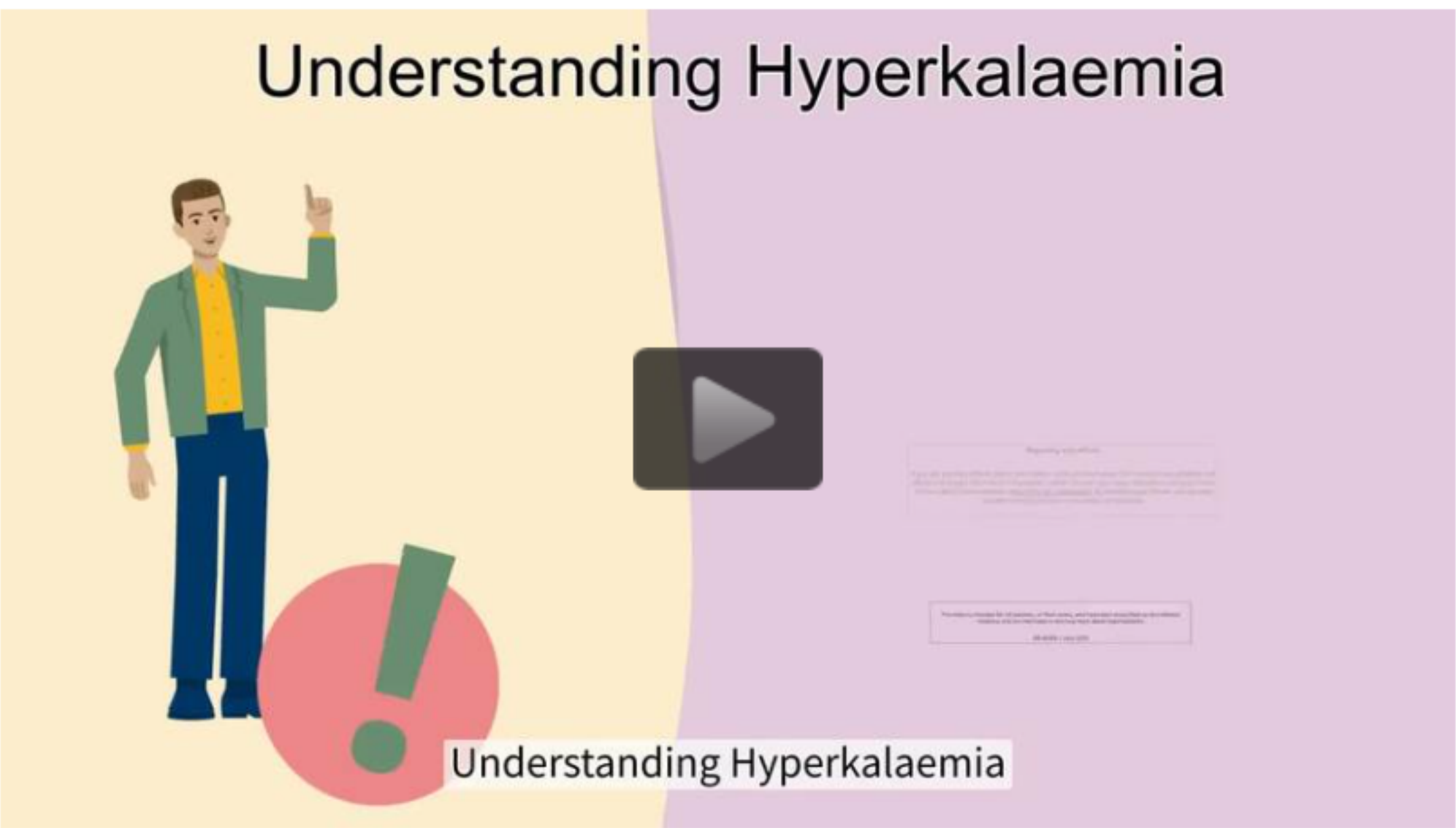
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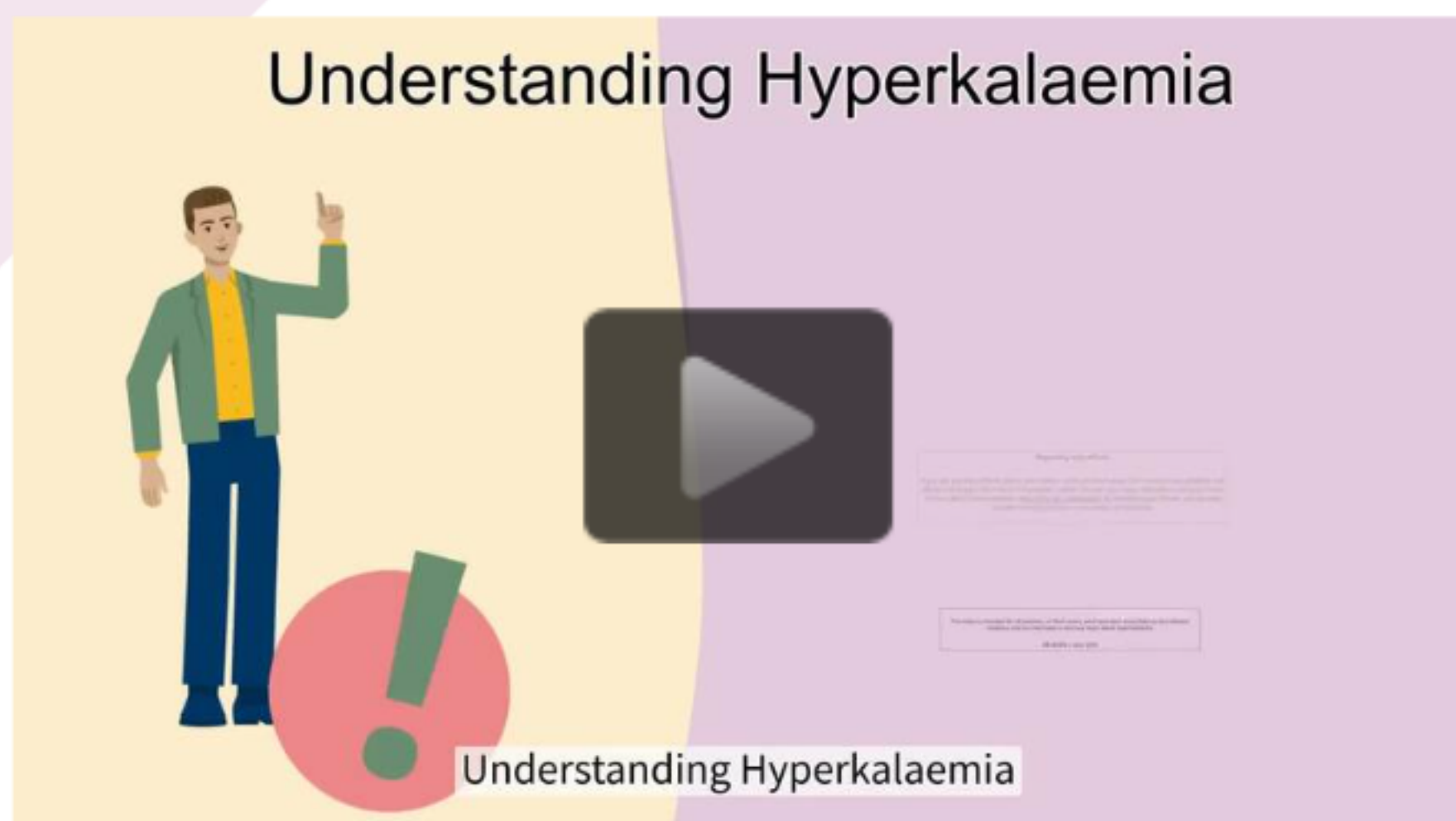
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## Protecting your kidneys and heart – RAASi therapy

This page is for people living with heart or kidney diseases (known as cardiorenal diseases) who are taking medicines called RAASi (Renin-Angiotensin-Aldosterone System Inhibitor) therapy.

When you’re living with a cardiorenal disease, there can be lots to think about. It is important for you to understand your condition and your medicines.

### What is RAASi therapy?

‘RAASi therapy’ is a term used to describe a group of medicines. RAASi stands for ‘Renin-Angiotensin-Aldosterone System Inhibitor’. RAASi medicines are used to help control blood pressure and protect your heart and kidneys. This is known as ‘cardiorenal protection’.

#### There are different types of RAASi therapy:

- ACE inhibitors (angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors) – medicines that end in ‘pril’, such as ‘ramipril’ and ‘enalapril’
- ARB (angiotensin 2 receptor blockers) – medicines that end in ‘sartan’, such as ‘losartan’ and ‘candesartan’
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- ARN inhibitors (angiotensin receptor/neprilysin inhibitors) – such as ‘sacubitril/valsartan’ also known as Entresto

### Why have I been prescribed RAASi therapy?

RAASi therapy is usually prescribed for people who have one or more condition impacting their heart or kidneys. These include chronic kidney disease and heart failure. You may also be prescribed it for hypertension (high blood pressure).

Your heart and kidneys are really important organs. They work together in your body and are connected through a network of veins and arteries. Your heart sends a constant supply of blood around the body. Your kidneys filter the blood and help regulate blood pressure. Because they work so closely together, when one of these organs is affected by something, the other is likely to be impacted too.

### How does RAASi therapy work?

RAASi medicines work on a system in the body called the ‘Renin Angiotensin Aldosterone System’ or RAAS. This system controls your blood pressure and electrolyte balance. Electrolytes are minerals like sodium and potassium. Diseases like chronic kidney disease and heart failure can make the RAAS overactive. When the RAAS is overactive, it can increase the levels of certain hormones in the body. This can cause inflammation, fibrosis (thickening or scarring of tissue) or hypertrophy (increase in size) of your heart or kidneys. This can make your chronic kidney disease and heart failure worse.

RAASi therapy works to control the RAAS system. They do this by blocking certain hormones. This helps to protect the heart and kidneys.

### What are the benefits of RAASi therapy?

RAASi therapy can help control blood pressure and protect the heart and kidneys. Research has shown that RAASi therapy can improve health outcomes for people with chronic kidney disease and heart failure.

Your healthcare team will try to get as close as possible to your target dose of RAASi therapy. This is to help protect your heart and kidneys. They will talk to you about your treatment options. Together, you can decide on a plan that works best for you.

### What are the potential risks of RAASi therapy?

RAASi therapy helps protect the heart and kidneys. But they can cause high levels of potassium. This happens because the kidneys are less able to filter potassium out of the body. So, RAASi can increase the risk of higher amounts of potassium in the blood known as ‘hyperkalaemia’.

As RAASi helps to protect the heart and kidneys, your doctor will try to avoid lowering or stopping your RAASi therapy if you have higher levels of potassium in your blood.

### How your AZmed helps

Lokelma helps by managing hyperkalaemia. This will help to make sure you can stay on your target dose of RAASi to protect your heart and kidneys.

See the ‘[Protect Your Kidneys and Heart booklet](#)’ in the [Info to download](#) section of this website to learn more.

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