

Feature Topic: **Kidney Stones**

Question: What are Kidney Stones and how do you treat them?

Dr. Redd Says: In the US about 10 to 15 percent of adults will have kidney stones in their life time. About a million Americans develop kidney stones each year. If you have had kidney stones before your probability of having recurrence is about 70 to 80 percent. The younger you are with the first attack, the more likely you will have a recurrence.

The number one cause of kidney stones is poor hydration. In other words, you don't drink enough water. The color of your urine will tell you if you are getting enough water. The urine should be a light yellow color. If it is dark yellow or orange you may not be getting enough water. Keep in mind that if you are taking B-complex, your urine will likely be bright yellow, so to check your hydration you will need to stop your B vitamins for a couple of days.

Kidney stones are made of different minerals, but the most common is calcium oxalate (about 75% of stones). We do not suggest you reduce your calcium intake however. If you take calcium we do suggest you make sure you are taking a good calcium such as lactate or citrate. Do not use calcium carbonate.

Digestive problems and high blood pressure elevate your chances of developing kidney stones. Drinking soda pop or coffee as well as living a sedentary life style can also increase your chances of developing kidney stones. Eating refined sugar and regular table salt (not sea salt) can also increase your chances of developing kidney stones. Any nonfermented soy products such as soy milk, green soy beans and tofu increase your likelihood of developing kidney stones as does drinking beer.

What can you do if you get a kidney stone? Unless the stone is very large (which would require medical intervention) it is recommended you do nothing. 90 percent of all kidney stones will pass on their own within a few days or weeks. However, it can be quite painful so you may require pain medication while your body is working it out.

Some doctors recommend drinking one to two liters of Coca Cola Classic within two or three hours for an acute kidney stone attack. This may work because of the phosphoric acid content in the drink might dissolve small stones. However, if you are diabetic you certainly can't do this and you could very well end up on the mother of all sugar and caffeine highs for a while. But, if it dissolves the kidney stones, it could be worth it. Do NOT drink Coke to prevent kidney stones. The damage of long term use far out ways any potential benefit. If you do this "Coke Flush" you should bleed off the carbonation from the Coke before drinking it.

Another remedy is to take Phosfood drops and Agrinex. The phosphorus in the Phosfood dissolves the stones and the Arginex helps support and flush the kidneys. These are made by Standard Process Labs and may help dissolve the stones. You can only get these from a doctor and "yes", we do carry them in our dispensary.

Like many disease, kidney stones are much better prevented than treated once you have them, so drink water, avoid the foods mentioned above and stay active.

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