

Understanding Kidney Stones

Kidney Stones

Kidney stones are usually made of uric acid, calcium and phosphate. A stone located in your urinary tract system causes the pain you are having.

These stones usually pass through your system and leave your body in your urine. If they get stuck, you can have a backup of urine, severe pain, fever, vomiting and blood in your urine.

The content, texture, size and likelihood of getting kidney stones varies between people. Men get kidney stones more often than women.

How To Help Pass Kidney Stones

- Increase the amount of fluids you drink. (Water is the best choice.)
- Strain your urine with the strainer you received. The kidney stones may be small. Keep any stones for your health care provider to inspect.
- Take your pain medicine as directed.
- Call your health care provider or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you:
 - have pain that is not relieved with medicine or rest for more than 18 hours
 - develop a fever (more than 101 F)
 - have heavy bleeding when you urinate
 - cannot urinate
 - are vomiting too much to drink liquids.
- Make a follow-up appointment with your doctor as directed.

How To Prevent Kidney Stones

Because you have a kidney stone, you are at increased risk of developing more stones. There are several things you can do to prevent new kidney stones.

- Drink six to eight 8-ounce glasses of fluids a day. Water is a good choice. A lot of urine passing through your urinary tract helps to prevent new stones from forming.
 - Keep a large supply of your favorite beverages handy.
 - Try to drink an 8-ounce glass of fluid every 2 hours and once during the night.
 - Increase the amount of fluids you drink during strenuous exercise or during warmer weather. You may lose more fluid through sweating at these times.
- Eat your regular diet, unless your health care provider tells you otherwise. Some kidney stones form more easily when you eat certain foods.
- Walk and resume your everyday activity. Avoid sports or strenuous exercise for about one week or until your health care provider says it's OK.
- At your follow-up visit, your health care provider may prescribe medicine or a change in your diet to keep a certain type of stone from forming.

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When to Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you have any of the following:

- the urgency to urinate
- the need to urinate often
- urine that is smoky colored
- burning during urinating.

These symptoms may mean you have a urinary infection. This could lead to kidney damage and could cause stones to reform.