

# 51 Tips for Dealing Kidney Stones

Kidney stones can be a very painful experience. This ebook is designed to give you ideas on how to prevent and treat kidney stones.

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# **BASICS**

This first set of tips will go over some of the basics of kidney stones.

## **1. Definition**

Kidney stones start when minerals and other substances in over concentrated urine form crystals on your kidneys. These crystals can combine to form small, hard masses, or stones. Most kidney stones pass into your bladder without causing any permanent damage, but some cause excruciating pain, while others need surgery.

## **2. History**

Kidney stones can be dated back to the age of the Egyptian pyramids, and they are still a common disorder today. In fact, over the years, there have been more and more incidences of kidney stones.

## **3. Symptoms**

You can have kidney stones without experiencing symptoms. If you do have signs, it probably means that there is a blockage. Here are some of the common symptoms:

- Intense pain that can vary in intensity over periods of five to 15 minutes.
- Cloudy, bloody, or foul-smelling urine
- Nausea and vomiting
- Persistent urge to urinate
- Fever and chills

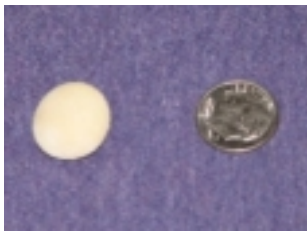
## **4. Causes**

There are a lot of factors that can cause kidney stones, including:

- Heredity
- Lifestyle factors
- Medical conditions
- Diet
- Drugs
- Climate

## **5. Prevention**

There are lots of things that you can do that will prevent your risk of getting kidney stones. Many of these involve simply making a few lifestyle changes. We'll talk more about these lifestyle changes later in this ebook.



## TYPES

This next set of tips will discuss the four different types of kidney stones.

### 6. Calcium Stones

About four out of five kidney stones are calcium stones. These stones are mainly combinations of calcium and oxalate. Oxalate occurs naturally in some fruits and vegetables.

### 7. Struvite Stones

Struvite stones are almost always the result of chronic urinary tract infections. Women have struvite stones more often than men. They come from an increased amount of ammonia in the urine, which then turn into struvite stones. They are often large, and are a horn shape that can seriously damage your kidneys.

### 8. Uric Acid Stones

These stones are formed of uric acid, a byproduct of protein metabolism. You're more likely to develop uric acid stones if you've undergone chemotherapy, you eat a high-protein diet or you have certain genetic factors that predispose you to the condition.

### 9. Cystine Stones

Very few people get cystine stones. They're usually a result of a hereditary disorder. This disorder causes the kidneys to excrete a lot of certain amino acids (cystinuria).



## **RISK FACTORS**

This next set of tips will review the risk factors associated with kidney stones.

### **10. Family History**

Family history plays a big role in the risk of developing kidney stones. If a family member has kidney stones, you're more likely to develop stones as well. Also, if you've had kidney stones before, you're at risk of developing it again.

### **11. Not Enough Fluids**

Not drinking enough fluids puts you at risk for getting kidney stones. Also, living in a hot, dry climate, or working in a hot environment puts you at a higher risk, because you lose fluids quicker.

### **12. Diet**

Your diet can put you at risk for developing kidney stones. For instance, if you eat a lot of protein (meat, chicken and fish) and sodium (salt), your risk is higher for developing kidney stones.

## **13. Sex, Race, and Age**

Here are some statistics about kidney stones in relation to sex, race, and age:

- Most people who develop kidney stones are between the ages of 20 and 70.
- Men are more likely to develop kidney stones than women.
- White Americans are at higher risk of kidney stones than are black Americans.

## **14. Medications**

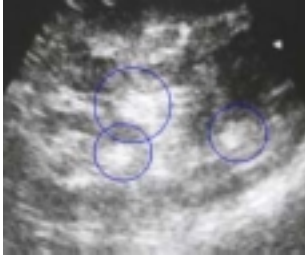
Certain medications can put you at risk for kidney stones. Diuretics, for example, can increase your risk of developing kidney stones in some situations. Make sure to check with your doctor about all the medications you take.

## **15. Diseases**

Rare diseases such as renal tubular acidosis and cystinuria can increase your risk of kidney stones. More common disorders such as chronic urinary tract infections, gout, and hyperparathyroidism can also cause kidney stones.

## **16. Activity**

Limited activity can cause your bones to release more calcium, putting you at risk for getting kidney stones. If you're bedridden or very stationary for a long period of time, you're at a bigger risk.



## **DIAGNOSING**

This next set of tips will talk about how kidney stones are diagnosed.

### **17. X-ray**

If your doctor suspects kidney stones, he may order an X-ray. An abdominal X-ray can show most kidney stones and can also help the doctor judge changes in the size of the stone over a period of time.

### **18. Ultrasound**

Some doctors use an ultrasound instead of X-rays. An ultrasound is safe, painless and noninvasive. The drawback is that it may miss smaller stones.

### **19. Intravenous Pyelography**

An intravenous pyelography is done by injecting a contrast dye into a vein in your arm. A series of X-rays is then taken as the dye moves through your kidneys, ureters and bladder.

### **20. CT Scan**

The CT scan has become pretty standard for evaluating kidney stones. It's a fast test, can identify even the smallest stones, and doesn't require contrast dye. The drawback is that it's very expensive.



## **TREATMENT**

This next set of tips will discuss some of the treatment options available for people with kidney stones.

### **21. Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy**

Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy (ESWL) is commonly used for treating kidney stones. It uses shock waves to break the stones into tiny pieces that are then passed in your urine. Patients who undergo ESWL usually require sedation or light anesthesia.

### **22. Percutaneous Nephrolithotomy**

Sometimes ESWL isn't effective, so your surgeon may need to remove your kidney stone through a small incision in your back using an instrument called a nephroscope. This is called a Percutaneous Nephrolithotomy.

### **23. Ureteroscopic Stone Removal**

An ureteroscopic stone removal procedure is performed to remove a stone lodged in a ureter. During this procedure, a small instrument called an ureteroscope snags the stone. An ultrasound can also be put through the scope to shatter the stone.

### **24. Parathyroid Surgery**

Some calcium stones are caused by overactive parathyroid glands, which are part of your thyroid gland. This causes excess calcium, thus resulting in kidney stones. A surgeon can perform parathyroid surgery, which stops the problem.



## **25.     Neuropathic Treatment**

Neuropathic treatment is a therapy that focuses on nutrition. Many people believe that proper nutrition lead to healthy kidney function and may discourage stone formation.



## MEDICATIONS

There are different medications for the four different types of kidney stones. This next set of tips will list some of the medications used to treat each kind.

### 26. Calcium Stones

If you're prone to calcium stones, your doctor may prescribe a thiazide diuretic. If you have calcium stones because renal tubular acidosis, your doctor may put you on sodium or potassium bicarbonate.

### 27. Struvite Stones

Since struvite stones are caused by bacteria in the urine, antibiotics are used to cure and prevent them. Your doctor may suggest long-term use of antibiotics in small doses to prevent any future kidney stones.

### 28. Uric Acid Stones

For uric acid stones, your doctor may want you to take Zylprim or Aloprim. These medications reduce uric acid levels in your blood and urine.

### 29. Cystine Stones

Cystine stones are the most difficult to treat because they are the hardest. Your doctor may prescribe medications to alkalinize the urine, in addition to recommending an extremely high urine output.



## THINGS YOU CAN DO AT HOME

There are several things that you can do at home to treat and even prevent kidney stones. This next set of tips will discuss some of these.

### 30. Drink Water

Probably one of the simplest things that you can do, drinking water can really help lessen your chance of getting kidney stones. You should drink a minimum of 50% of body weight in ounces of water daily. For example, a 150 lb person would drink 75 oz of water.

### 31. Eat Well

Eating good foods can reduce your risk of developing kidney stones. Foods like:

- Leafy green vegetables
- Fruits
- Whole grains
- Legumes
- Fish and poultry (in small portions)
- Brown rice,
- Bananas
- Oats
- Barley

### 32. Stay Active

Exercising and staying active can help prevent kidney stones. Studies have shown that people who lead active lifestyles are less likely to develop kidney stones. Start exercising every day to reduce your risks.

### **33. Castor Oil Pack**

Castor oil has anti inflammatory properties and may be used to relieve painful cramping or spasms. To make a pack, soak a towel in castor oil, and put it where it hurts

### **34. Hot Pack**

Hot packs help to relax muscles that are tense from the pain of kidney stones. They also can help the stones pass easier.

### **35. Hot Vinegar**

Hot vinegar can also help with the severe pain of kidney stones. Soak a towel in a 50:50 vinegar-water solution and place it over the painful area.

### **36. Restricting Oxalates**

Restricting foods high in oxalates can help prevent kidney stones. These foods include:

- Beets
- Collards
- Okra
- Refried beans
- Spinach
- Sweet potatoes

### **37. Careful of Vitamin C**

Some studies show that actually restricting your vitamin C consumption, it may help prevent kidney stones. More than 3-4 grams per day can increase oxalate production, and thus increasing the risks of kidney stones.

### **38. Watch Out For D**

Excessive amounts of vitamin D can mean a risk for kidney stones. Too much vitamin D can mean too much calcium, which can put you at risk for kidney stones. Never get any more than 400 IU of vitamin D per day.

### **39. Other Things to Avoid**

Other things that you should avoid to lower your risk of getting kidney stones:

- Sugar
- Antacids
- Excessive protein
- Dairy products
- Salt
- Carbonated beverages
- Caffeine

### **40. Oral Calcium Myth**

Restricting your intake of calcium doesn't seem to lower your risk. Researchers have found that women with the highest calcium intake are *less* likely to develop kidney stones than are women who consume less calcium. Roper



## HERBAL REMEDIES AND SUPPLEMENTS

This last set of tips will go over some herbal remedies and supplements that have been useful in relieving kidney stones.

### 41. Magnesium Citrate

Studies have shown that low magnesium intake can mean high risk for kidney stones. Taking magnesium supplements may not only prevent stones from forming, but it can decrease the size of an existing stone. A good dose is 500 mg daily.

### 42. Vitamin B-6

Researchers have found that a vitamin B-6 deficiency tends to increase urinary oxalate, which may then lead to kidney stones. A good dose is 25 mg per day.

### 43. Vitamin A

Foods rich in vitamin A have been known to treat and prevent kidney stones. Some of these foods include:

- Apricots
- Broccoli
- Cantaloupe
- Pumpkins
- Squash

#### **44. Bearberry**

Bearberry is an evergreen shrub that can be used as a diuretic and antiseptic for the urinary tract. It has been used for a long time to fight urinary tract or bladder infections. You can find Bearberry in a health food store in tea form or capsules.

#### **45. Cleavers**

Cleavers have a history of treating congestive kidney disorders, stones, and urinary infections. Cleavers are also known as Clivers, Goosegrass or Bedstraw. You can find them at any herbal store.

#### **46. Corn Silk**

Corn silk is used to soothe the pain of kidney stones. It also has mild diuretic properties. You can get corn-silk at your local herb store to increase urine flow and heal your kidneys.

#### **47. Cramp Bark**

Cramp Bark is used to relax smooth muscles, and is also works as an antispasmodic. This really helps with the pain of kidney stones. Again, you can get this at a herbal or health food store.

## **48. Gravel Root**

Gravel root is used for many things, including kidney stones. It also helps with the following conditions:

- Urinary infections
- Prostatitis
- Pelvic inflammatory disease
- Rheumatism
- Gout

## **49. Khella**

Khella has been treating kidney stones for a long time. Research has shown that the khella relaxes ureter tissue, allowing smaller stones to pass easier.

## **50. Seven Barks**

Seven barks is an herb that has a sedative effect on the urinary system. It helps the system to relax, making kidney stones easier to pass through.

## **51. Stone Root**

Stone root is a strong diuretic that has a history of helping kidney stones pass as well as preventing any more from forming.