



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

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General Recommendations for Prevention of Kidney Stones

You can prevent kidney stones! To reduce your risk for forming new stones, please follow these guidelines:

INCREASE URINE VOLUME. The number one thing you can do to prevent stone formation is to drink more fluids, thereby diluting your urine. Your goal should be to urinate more than 2 liters per day. All fluids (water, coffee, juice, soda) count towards this goal. Adding lemons to your fluids and/or drinking fresh lemonade or orange juice helps increase your urinary citrate excretion, which can help inhibit stone formation.

DECREASE PROTEIN INTAKE. Most Americans exceed necessary protein intake. This can lead to stone formation (both uric acid and calcium type stones). As a general recommendation, limit your daily protein intake to 6-8 ounces per day of beef, pork, poultry, and fish. Eight ounces is about the size of 2 decks of cards.

DECREASE SALT/SODIUM INTAKE. The human body carefully regulates its sodium levels. When excess sodium is excreted in the urine, calcium is also excreted proportionally. In other words, the more sodium you take in and excrete, the more calcium you waste in the urine. Excess calcium in the urine can lead to new stone formation.

Try to reduce dietary sources of sodium, including fast foods, packaged or canned foods, and salty snacks. Watch out for silent sources such as softened water and sports drinks. Your goal should be to consume less than 2 grams (2000 milligrams) of sodium per day.

CONSUME ADEQUATE CALCIUM. Stone formers sometimes think they should restrict calcium intake. There is no research that supports this practice. The research is quite the contrary. Your body needs dietary calcium to support the skeleton. We encourage you to consume 2 servings of dairy products (approximately 1-1.2 grams of calcium) or other calcium rich food per day to maintain bone stores of calcium. Avoid calcium supplements in tablet or capsule form.

DECREASE OXALATE INTAKE. If you are forming calcium oxalate stones, general recommendations are to limit intake of high oxalate containing foods such as spinach, rhubarb, parsley, beets, berries, chocolates, nuts (peanuts), and teas. A list of high oxalate containing foods can be provided by our office for more information.

PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR OR OUR NURSING STAFF WITH ANY QUESTIONS.

