

KIDNEY STONES

Kidney stones are small, hard **mineral deposits** that form in the kidney. They may stay in the kidney or travel down the urinary tract.

The medical term for kidney stones is nephrolithiasis. The medical term for stones occurring in the urinary tract is urolithiasis.

Each year, more than **1 MILLION PEOPLE** visit emergency rooms for kidney stone problems.

Kidney stone disease is one of the oldest and **most common** problems of the urinary system.



There are **four main types** of kidney stones:

- **Calcium Stones** are the most common type. There are two types: calcium oxalate and calcium phosphate stones
- **Uric Acid Stones** are caused by having very acidic urine
- **Struvite Stones** are found often in people who have chronic urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- **Cystine Stones** are very rare, caused by a genetic kidney disease called cystinuria

Stones in the kidney often do not cause any symptoms. However, when a stone travels from the kidney to the bladder, it can become lodged in the ureter and block the flow of urine. This can cause the kidney to swell and cause pain.

If you've had a kidney stone and want to **avoid another one**:

- **Drink water** throughout the day. Remember to drink more to replace fluids you've lost when you sweat from exercise or are in hot weather
- **Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables**
- **Reduce the amount of salt, meat and foods with high oxalate content** in your diet
- **Eat the recommended amount of animal protein** (red meat, milk, pork, etc.) in your diet

Men used to be much more likely than women to develop kidney stones, but recent studies show the number of women getting kidney stones is **almost equal**.

Kidney stones come in virtually any color; but most are **yellow or brown**.

Kidney stones vary in size. They can be as small as a **grain of sand** or as large as a pearl. Some stones are even the size of a **golf ball!**