

**PATIENT INFORMATION****PREVENTION OF CALCIUM OXALATE KIDNEY STONES**

A kidney stone is a hard crystal that forms in the urine and builds up in the inner kidney. Kidney stones may be comprised of various substances. The most common type of stone contains calcium in combination with either oxalate or phosphate (70-80%). These chemicals are part of a person's normal diet and make up important parts of the body, such as bones and muscles. If you are prone to develop these types of stones, changes in your diet, described below, may help to reduce your chances of developing a calcium oxalate kidney stone.

**1. Drink lots of liquids.**

Try to drink at least 10 to 12 glasses every day. This is the **most important thing you can do** to keep your kidneys from making stones. At least half of your liquids should be water. You can drink other liquids for the other half, but try not to use grapefruit juice.

**2. Consume a moderate amount of calcium.**

Try to include 2 or 3 servings of dairy foods or high-calcium foods every day. Stones are usually made of calcium, but that doesn't mean that you shouldn't eat much calcium. It actually helps bind oxalate in your gut.

Oxalate is a substance in many foods, and it binds to calcium in your stomach and intestinal tract. Usually, if it binds appropriately, the oxalate will not be absorbed in your system. But if oxalate does not bind calcium, it may get into your kidneys, and bind with urine calcium to form kidney stones. It is better for your calcium to come from food than from calcium supplements. If you do take calcium pills, take them with meals. However do not take too much calcium, either.

**3. Watch Oxalates**

Many foods have oxalates in them, but only a few will add get excreted into your urine. **Try to cut down on these foods:**

- Tea
- Strawberries
- Nuts and peanut butter
- Beets, Rhubarb
- Chocolate
- Spinach
- Wheat bran

**4. Cut down on sodium (salt).**

Try and limit foods high in salt, particularly many convenience foods, fast foods or processed foods.

**5. Don't eat too much meat.**

We need about 2 - 3 servings each day. Each serving should be about the size of a deck of cards.

**6. Don't use too much Vitamin C.**

We need about less than 100 milligrams each day, but some people take more in vitamin pills. If you do take a supplement, make sure you're not taking more than 500mg of Vitamin C per day.