

## How to Prevent Kidney Stones

Patients that have had passed a kidney stone have a 50% chance of a further episode in the next 10 years.

Your doctor will perform radiological and blood tests to ensure that you do not suffer from any treatable structural or metabolic conditions that may predispose you to further kidney stone formation. If these conditions have been excluded, the likelihood is that your kidney stone developed secondary to dehydration. The four following points of advice should decrease your chances of further stone formation.

1. **Drink more.** The best advice is to drink more fluid during the day. How do you know how much is enough? You should drink enough fluid such that your urine is a light yellow colour. The best fluid to drink is water but juice, coffee and tea are also acceptable in moderate quantities. You will need to drink more during summer, especially if you are outdoors or playing sport.
2. **Lemon juice.** Citric acid prevents the chemicals that form stones from combining together in the kidney and solidifying. The most concentrated source of citric acid is in lemons. Adding a squeeze of a lemon to your jug of water in the fridge will make all that extra fluid you need to drink more palatable.
3. **Less meat.** If you have meat every night of the week, you may want to consider cutting down on the size of your portions to 100-150g, or reducing the number of times per week you have meat. Meat protein is broken down into purines which, in excess, cause the urine to become more acidic. Acidic urine predisposes to certain types of stone formation.
4. **Less salt.** Salt is known to drag Calcium into the kidney when it is excreted. Calcium is one of the main constituents of kidney stones. Add less salt to your cooking and avoid adding salt to food on the table. Remember that many sauces (eg. Soya sauce) contain very high levels of salt.

Following the advice outlined above should result in a lower chance of stone formation over time. If your doctor has identified a specific metabolic or structural abnormality then additional treatment will be needed.