

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Kidney Stones

<http://www.urologychannel.com/patient-information-kidney-stones/index.shtml>

Renal stone disease, also called nephrolithiasis, is a relatively common urologic condition. It is estimated that approximately 1 adult in 10 will develop kidney stones (calculi) during his or her lifetime. Kidney stones often cause pain that begins in the lower back and spreads to the groin and may be severe.

Stones that move from the kidney may become lodged in the urinary tract (e.g., in the ureter) and can block urine flow. In severe cases, urinary stones may lead to kidney damage. If you experience kidney stone symptoms, such as blood in the urine (hematuria), lower back pain, urinary urgency, or painful urination, contact a urologist or other qualified health care provider.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor about kidney stones. By asking the right questions, you can learn how to work with your doctor to develop a successful treatment plan and help reduce your risk for further kidney stones. **Print this page**, check off the questions you would like answered, and take it with you to your appointment.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Kidney Stones

- What are kidney stones?
- What types of diagnostic tests (e.g., laboratory tests, imaging tests) will be performed to determine if I have a kidney stone?
- What tests will be performed to determine the type, size, and location of my stone(s)?
- How should I prepare for these diagnostic tests?
- What is a 24-hour urine collection analysis?
- Do you recommend this test? Why or why not?
- What type of kidney stone do I have?
- Do you suspect that my kidney stones are related to another medical condition?
- If so, how will this condition be diagnosed and treated?
- Am I at increased risk for kidney stones because of my family history or lifestyle factors, such as diet, nutrition supplements, stress levels, and/or physical activity levels?

- If so, how can I help reduce my kidney stone risk?
- Do you recommend that I follow a special diet or avoid certain foods to help prevent kidney stones? Why or why not?
- What are the signs of kidney stone complications? What should I do if my symptoms worsen or I experience complications? **Telephone number to call:**
- How will my renal stone disease be treated? Why do you recommend this treatment?
- What are the potential benefits and risks of this treatment?
- If this treatment is unsuccessful, what other options are available?
- Will over-the-counter or prescription medications be used to treat my kidney stones or to manage my kidney stone pain?
- If so, how often should I take this medicine?
- What are the possible side effects of my kidney stone medication? What should I do if I experience severe side effects? **Telephone number to call:**
- Might ureteroscopy, lithotripsy, or other treatments be used to break up or bypass my stone(s)?
- If so, what do these treatments involve?
- How should I prepare for my treatment?
- Might my kidney stones require surgical removal?
- If so, what does this surgery involve?
- How should I prepare for surgery?
- When can I resume normal activities following kidney stone treatment? **Date**
- How will my condition be monitored during kidney stone treatment? How often will I have follow-up appointments?

Can you recommend sources for additional kidney stone information?

Next appointment: Doctor: **Date:** **Time:**

Notes/Additional Information