

# Kidney Stones: Preventing Kidney Stones Through Diet

## British Columbia Specific Information

If you have had kidney stones before, you are at a higher risk of getting them again. Eating certain foods may help lower your risk of having kidney stones again. To learn about what foods you should choose to help lower your risk of having kidney stones, see our [Healthy Eating Guidelines For People with Kidney Stones](#) web page.

You may also call **8-1-1** to speak to a registered dietitian, Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., or you can [Email a HealthLinkBC Dietitian](#).

## Introduction

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If you have kidney stones, your doctor or dietitian may talk with you about an eating plan to help prevent new stones. The most common types of kidney stones are calcium and oxalate. Each type may require a different eating plan. There are certain foods you can have, and other foods you should avoid, to reduce the chance that you will get kidney stones again.

- If you had kidney stones before, you are more likely to get them again. But by following the eating plan your doctor or dietitian suggests, you may prevent new kidney stones.
- Drink plenty of water. The most common cause of kidney stones is not drinking enough fluids, especially water.

## How can you prevent kidney stones?

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The following tips may lower your chance of getting kidney stones:

- The most important thing you can do is drink more fluids, especially water if your doctor says it is okay. Try to drink 8 to 10 glasses of water a day. If you don't already drink that much, slowly increase how much you drink. For example, add one more glass of water each day until you are drinking 8 to 10 glasses a day. This slow increase will give your body time to adjust to the extra fluids. You are drinking enough water when your urine is clear or light yellow. If it is dark yellow, you are not drinking enough fluids.
- If you had a calcium kidney stone, it may help to:
  - Eat less salt and salty foods. One way to do this is to avoid processed foods and limit how often you eat at restaurants.
  - Talk to your doctor or dietitian about how much calcium you need every day. Try to get your calcium from food, rather than from supplements. Milk, cheese, and yogurt are all good sources of calcium.
- If you had an oxalate kidney stone, your doctor may ask you to limit certain [foods that have a lot of oxalate](#), such as dark green vegetables, nuts, and chocolate. You don't have to give up these foods, just eat or drink less of them.

If you have had kidney stones in the past, it may also help to:

- Eat a balanced diet that is not too high in animal protein. This includes beef, chicken, pork, fish, and eggs. These foods contain a lot of protein, and too much protein may lead to kidney stones. You don't have to give up these foods. Talk to your doctor or dietitian about how much protein you need and the best way to get it.
- Increase how much [fibre](#) you eat. Fibre includes oat bran, beans, whole wheat breads, wheat cereals, cabbage, and carrots.
- Avoid grapefruit juice.
- Drink lemonade made from real lemons (not lemon flavouring). It is high in citrate, which may help prevent kidney stones.
- Talk to your doctor if you take vitamins or supplements. He or she may want you to limit how much fish liver oil or calcium supplements you take. Also, do not take more than the recommended daily dose of vitamins C and D.

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