

[IMAGE]

Prevent Kidney Stones With Lemonade?

If life gives you lemons, make lemonade. But what if life gives you kidney stones? For most people, a drug called potassium citrate is prescribed, but for those who can't tolerate potassium citrate's side effects or are allergic to certain medications, the results of a small study published at the American Urological Association's annual meeting indicate that lemonade may work just as well.

Kidney stones develop when minerals in the urine crystallize and build up inside the kidney. In most people, urine contains a chemical called citrate, which breaks down the minerals and prevents the stones from forming. In this study, researchers followed 12 people who suffered from hypocitrauria, a condition that causes a person to produce low levels of urinary citrate. Patients in the group drank lemonade made from 120 milliliters of lemon juice mixed with 2 liters of water throughout the day; small amounts of sugar or sugar substitute were added for taste.

Results showed that 11 of the 12 patients had increased urinary citrate levels during lemonade therapy. The kidney stones of the people taking lemonade therapy also decreased in size and number during the course of treatment. While lemonade may help reduce the incidence of kidney stones, it's only part of a larger program. Lowering the amount of salt in the diet, eating smaller portions of red meat, and increasing fluid intake can all help slow the formation of existing stones and prevent new ones from developing. For more information, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/nutrition/foods.

Reference:

Kang D, et al. Lemonade-based dietary manipulation in patients with hypocitraturic nephrolithiasis. Abstract #1038. Presented at the 101st Annual Scientific Meeting of the American Urological Association, Atlanta, Ga., May 23, 2006.

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