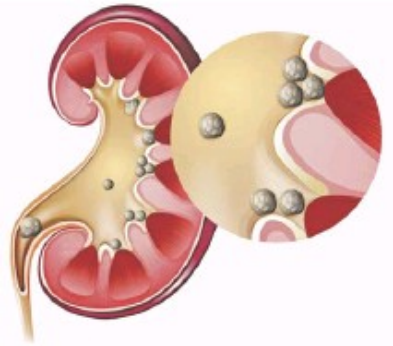
- Nephrolithiasis / Foods

Want to prevent kidney stones? Watch What you eat—expert

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NEPHROLITHIASIS, or more commonly called as kidney stones (or "renal calculi"), are the crystal-like substances that are made from chemicals in the urine and are usually formed in the kidney. They should be excreted from the body through the urethra and should typically be painless.



About 2.3 percent of the country's population have nephrolithiasis, one of the most common disorders of kidney disease. It occurs mostly in men over the age of 40 and over 70 years of age for women.

According to www.kidney.org, there are at least four types of kidney stones, which include calcium oxalate, uric acid, struvite, and cystine. Common symptoms of having kidney stones are severe pain in the lower back, presence of blood in the urine, nausea, vomiting, fever and chills, or urine that smells bad or looks cloudy. Possible causes, the site said, are drinking less fluids, eating food with too much salt or sugar such as fructose, obesity, infections, or family history.

When it comes to discovering if an individual has kidney stones or not, the most common ways that medical professionals use include imaging techniques like X-rays, CT scans and ultrasound. These types of equipment can help in determining the location, size, shape and number of kidney stones present in the body. Blood and urine examinations can also be performed to determine the presence of minerals that may lead to the formation of kidney stones.

Renouncing the stone

AS they say, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Healthcare professionals make sound recommendations to prevent kidney stones from forming, such as drinking of plenty of water each day, about eight glasses daily.

Also, it's best to eat food types that are high in nutrients that can prevent stone formation such as potassium, calcium and magnesium. limited consumption of food that is high sugar, salt, animal protein and calcium is best, and maintaining an ideal body weight is crucial in preventing kidney stones from developing.

Are there other secrets for better kidney health?

ACCORDING to Cardinal Santos Medical Center (CSMC), the secret lies in educating and empowering Filipinos to battle kidney problems and other diseases

More and more Filipinos are at risk of developing complications like kidney stones because of the love of oily and salty food. "Sometimes, even our favorite food can cause harm to our bodily functions if we eat too much of it," says Dr. Jason letran, a urologist at CSMC. "An uptick in sodium content increases the amount of calcium in urine, while an excess of sugar can interfere with calcium and magnesium absorption, which in turn leads to the development of kidney stones."

He said kidney stones are usually formed when there is an abundance of crystal-forming substances in the urine like calcium, oxalate and uric acid, and not enough fluid to dilute them. This

can cause them to bind together and harden.

For its part, CSMC is helping raise awareness about kidney health and promoting preventive measures against diseases as part of the observation of National Kidney Month in the Philippines. The hospital recognizes the importance of kidney health in the lives of Filipinos and is dedicated to fostering a healthier community.

Healthier food options

WHILE advanced treatments are available, the best way to prevent kidney stones, according to letran, is to prepare healthier food options, watch the portions, and eat responsibly.

"Some major dietary aggressors are large amounts of red meat, seafood, and shellfish because of the sodium content. Junk foods and highly processed foods, too," said letran. "Of course, too much sugar is also bad for the body. It increases your risk for packing on weight, and obesity makes you more prone to developing stones."

"While of course we advocate for prevention of kidney stones by making healthier lifestyle choices, we hope patients know that Cardinal Santos is happy to offer its services to those who need it, especially those who are currently suffering from kidney stones or are exhibiting symptoms," said letran. "Patients are assured that they will receive the best possible care here."

The Cardinal Santos Medical Center's Urology and Stone Center, located at the ground floor of the CSMC main building, offers some of the most comprehensive kidney-related services not just in the Philippines but in Asia. It houses a stateof-the-art Dornier Compact Delta lithotripter, which ensures precise and effective disintegration of kidney stones, and is equipped with f luoroscopy and ultrasound imaging to help locate stones more accurately. The center also provides services such as minimally invasive urologic surgeries, laparoscopic surgery of the urinary tract, and treatments for prostate cancer and other cancers of the urinary tract.

As one of the country's premier hospitals, CSMC always encourages its entire community to actively participate in empowering themselves and their loved ones with the knowledge and tools necessary to prioritize kidney health. "Together, let us pave the way for a healthier and