



**Concord Hospital Center for Urologic Care** offers specialized diagnostic and treatment programs together with a complete range of fully integrated urologic care for men and women. Our expert team of urologic physicians and surgeons has provided the most advanced care and treatment options since 1960.

Through our **Kidney Stone Treatment & Prevention Program**, our urologists provide a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach to the diagnosis, treatment, and management of kidney stones. Our complete stone management program includes:

- Emphasis on minimally invasive surgery and complete medical, dietary and metabolic stone disease management
- Round-the-clock access to our own Storz SLX-F2 Lithotripter for precise treatment of kidney and ureteral stones.

The Concord Hospital Center for Urologic Care integrates highly skilled medical staff and services for cancer screening, prevention, radiation therapy, medical oncology, surgery, and support. We also offer our:

- **Prostate & Urologic Cancer Program**, in partnership with Concord Hospital Payson Center for Cancer Care, featuring high definition, robotic assisted laparoscopic surgical technology; management and treatment of all urologic cancers including kidney, bladder and testicular; and expansive support services.
- **Pelvic Medicine & Continence Program**, a comprehensive multidisciplinary approach for the treatment of urologic conditions commonly found in women.

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## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Kidney Stone Treatment and Prevention Program**

#### **High Tech & High Touch: The Latest Advances**

In addition to our comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach to the diagnosis, treatment, and management of urologic care, the accomplished team of physicians and surgeons at Concord Hospital Center for Urologic Care offers advanced technology for treating kidney and ureteral stones—among the most painful conditions patients can experience.

#### **WHAT ARE KIDNEY STONES?**

Kidney stones are made of salts and minerals in the urine that stick together to form small “pebbles.” They can be as small as grains of sand or as large as golf balls.

They may stay in your kidneys or travel out of your body through the urinary tract, the system that makes urine and carries it out of your body. The urinary system is made up of the kidneys, the tubes that connect the kidneys to the bladder (the ureters), and the tube that leads from the bladder out of the body (the urethra). When a stone travels through a ureter, it may cause no pain—or it may cause great pain and other symptoms.

#### **WHAT CAUSES KIDNEY STONES?**

Kidney stones form when a change occurs in the normal balance of water, salts, or minerals found in urine.

- One of the most common causes of kidney stones is not drinking enough water. Try to drink enough water to keep your urine clear (about 8 to 10 glasses of water a day).
- Strenuous exercise without adequate fluid replacement increases the risk of kidney stones.
- Kidney stones can also result from infection in the urinary tract.

Some people are more likely to get kidney stones because of a medical condition or family history. If other people in your family have had them, you may have them too.

#### **WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?**

Kidney stones often cause no pain while they are in the kidneys, but they can cause sudden, severe pain as they travel from the kidneys to the bladder.

Call a doctor right away if you think you have kidney stones. Watch for severe pain in your side, belly, or groin or for urine that looks pink or red. You may also feel sick to your stomach (nausea) and may vomit.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE KIDNEY STONES?

You may first find out that you have kidney stones when you see your doctor or go to an emergency department with pain in your belly or side. Your doctor will ask you questions about your pain and lifestyle and examine you. In addition, your doctor may request imaging tests, such as X-rays or CT scans, to look at your kidneys and urinary tract.

You may need more tests if you have more than one stone or have a family history of stones.

- The smaller a stone is, the more likely it is to pass on its own. About 9 out of every 10 stones smaller than 5 mm (0.2 in.) and about 5 out of every 10 stones 5 mm (0.2 in.) to 10 mm (0.4 in.) pass on their own.
- The average time a stone takes to pass ranges between 1 and 3 weeks; two-thirds of stones that pass on their own pass within 4 weeks of when the symptoms appeared.
- Approximately 1 or 2 out of every 10 kidney stones needs more than home treatment.

Kidney stones may not cause any pain. If this is the case, you may learn you have them when your doctor finds them during a test for another illness or disorder.

## WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS FOR TREATMENT?

Kidney stones are fairly common; although they can be very painful, they are treatable and in many cases, preventable. For most stones, your doctor may suggest common treatment options:

- Drinking enough water to keep your urine clear and help flush the stones out (8 to 10 glasses of water a day)
- Pain medicine, which you can take at home
- Medicine to help the stone pass more rapidly

If a stone is too large to pass on its own, if it is blocking the urinary tract, or if you have an infection, your physician or urologist may suggest medical or surgical treatment which may include:

- **Lithotripsy:** Short for Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy (ESWL), Lithotripsy uses precisely focused shock waves that pass easily through the body but are strong enough to break up a kidney stone. This is the most commonly used and non-invasive medical treatment for kidney stones.
- **Percutaneous nephrolithotomy or nephrolithotripsy.** The surgeon inserts a narrow telescope into the kidney through an incision in your back (the easiest place to access the kidneys), then removes the stone (lithotomy) or breaks it up and removes it (lithotripsy). This procedure may be used if ESWL does not work or if you have a very large stone.
- **Ureteroscopy.** Ureteroscopy is often used for stones that have moved from the kidney to the ureter. The surgeon passes a very thin telescope tube (ureteroscope) up the urinary tract to the stone's location, and then uses instruments to remove the stone or break it up for easier removal.

- **Open surgery.** The surgeon makes a cut in the side or the belly to reach the kidneys and remove the stone. This treatment is rarely used.

### **WHAT IS LITHOTRIPSY?**

Lithotripsy is the most commonly used medical treatment for removing kidney stones. The technology uses shock waves to break a kidney stone into small pieces so that the bits can pass out of your body in your urine.

Lithotripsy may work best for kidney stones that are still located in the kidney. It may be more difficult to break up a stone that has moved into the ureter, although this is still possible.

While lithotripsy has been available at Concord Hospital for years, the introduction of the SLX-F2 Lithotripter marks the first time lithotripsy will be available on a full-time basis. Concord Hospital is now the only hospital in the state with its own dedicated lithotripter.

### **WILL I HAVE KIDNEY STONES AGAIN?**

After you have had kidney stones, you are more likely to have them again. You can help prevent them by drinking enough water to keep your urine clear, about 8 to 10 glasses of water a day. In most cases your urologist can determine what caused your stone and can help you to prevent forming new stones with proper diet changes and/ or medication

A nutritionist may help you with a diet to help you eat less of certain foods that may trigger kidney stones in your body. Your doctor may also give you medicine to help prevent stones from forming.

### **WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?**

If you meet the criteria above, please schedule an exam now by calling your primary care physician. If you've already been diagnosed with kidney stones, talk with your doctor about the treatment options available to you.

For any questions about our **Kidney Stone Treatment & Prevention Program** at Concord Hospital Center for Urologic Care please call (603) 224-3388 or visit [www.concordhospital.org](http://www.concordhospital.org).