

diet when you have kidney stones

Diet When You Have Kidney Stones: What to Eat and What to Avoid

Diet when you have kidney stones plays a crucial role in managing symptoms and preventing future stone formation. If you've ever experienced the sharp pain of kidney stones, you know how important it is to take care of your kidneys through lifestyle choices—especially your diet. The foods and fluids you consume can either help dissolve existing stones or contribute to the formation of new ones. Understanding how to tailor your diet can make a significant difference in your kidney health.

Understanding Kidney Stones and Their Types

Before diving into diet specifics, it's helpful to understand what kidney stones are. Kidney stones are hard deposits made of minerals and salts that form inside your kidneys. They vary in type, and knowing which type you have can guide dietary choices.

Common Types of Kidney Stones

- **Calcium Stones:** These are the most common and often composed of calcium oxalate or calcium phosphate.
- **Uric Acid Stones:** Formed when urine is too acidic, often linked to diets high in purines.
- **Struvite Stones:** Usually related to infections and less influenced by diet.
- **Cystine Stones:** Caused by a rare genetic disorder.

Since calcium and uric acid stones are the most diet-influenced, focusing on these will help you understand how to adjust your eating habits effectively.

How Diet When You Have Kidney Stones Can Help

Dietary changes can reduce the risk of developing new stones or help manage existing ones. The goal is to alter the composition of your urine to prevent crystals from forming. This involves balancing fluid intake, modifying mineral consumption, and incorporating foods that aid kidney function.

Stay Hydrated: The Most Important Step

Drinking enough fluids is the cornerstone of any kidney stone prevention plan. Increased fluid intake dilutes substances in urine that lead to stones. Aim for at least 2 to 3 liters of water a day, unless your doctor advises otherwise. Water is best, but citrus drinks like lemonade or orange juice can also help by increasing citrate levels in the urine, which prevents stone formation.

Limit Oxalate-Rich Foods

For those with calcium oxalate stones, reducing oxalate intake is key. Oxalate binds with calcium to form stones. Foods high in oxalates include:

- Spinach
- Rhubarb
- Beets
- Nuts, especially almonds and cashews
- Chocolate and cocoa
- Tea

You don't need to eliminate these entirely but moderating intake and pairing oxalate-rich foods with calcium-rich foods during meals can reduce stone risk.

Moderate Calcium Intake—But Don't Cut It Out

Contrary to popular belief, calcium itself doesn't cause stones; in fact, dietary calcium binds to oxalate in the gut and prevents it from being absorbed into the bloodstream and reaching the kidneys. Adults should aim for 1,000 to 1,200 mg of calcium daily from food sources like dairy or fortified alternatives. Avoid calcium supplements unless prescribed, as those can increase stone risk.

Watch Your Sodium Intake

High sodium intake increases calcium excretion in urine, which can lead to

more calcium stones. Reducing salt in your diet not only benefits your kidneys but also supports overall heart health. Limit processed foods, fast foods, and salty snacks, and use herbs and spices for flavor instead of salt.

Specific Dietary Tips for Different Stone Types

Diet for Calcium Oxalate Stones

- Drink plenty of water.
- Limit high-oxalate foods.
- Maintain moderate calcium intake.
- Reduce sodium consumption.
- Avoid excessive vitamin C supplements, as they can increase oxalate levels.

Diet for Uric Acid Stones

Uric acid stones are linked to high levels of uric acid in urine, often resulting from diets rich in purines.

- Limit purine-rich foods like red meat, organ meats (liver, kidney), shellfish, and sardines.
- Increase intake of low-purine foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Maintain a neutral to slightly alkaline urine pH by consuming fruits and vegetables.
- Stay well-hydrated.
- Reduce alcohol consumption, especially beer.

Foods to Embrace and Foods to Avoid

Kidney Stone-Friendly Foods

- **Water and Hydrating Fluids:** Plain water, herbal teas, citrus juices (in moderation).
- **Fruits and Vegetables:** Particularly those that alkalinize urine, such as bananas, melons, cucumbers, and broccoli.
- **Whole Grains:** Brown rice, oatmeal, and whole wheat.

- **Low-fat Dairy:** Milk, yogurt, and cheese provide calcium without excess fat.
- **Plant-Based Proteins:** Beans, lentils, and tofu in moderation.

Foods to Avoid or Limit

- **High-Oxalate Foods:** As mentioned earlier, spinach, beets, nuts, chocolate, and tea.
- **High-Purine Foods:** Red meat, organ meats, seafood, and alcohol.
- **Salty and Processed Foods:** Chips, canned soups, fast food.
- **Sugary Beverages:** Soft drinks and sweetened juices that can increase stone risk.

Additional Lifestyle Factors to Support Kidney Health

While diet plays a significant role, other lifestyle habits complement your efforts to prevent kidney stones.

Maintain a Healthy Weight

Obesity is linked to an increased risk of kidney stones. Eating a balanced diet and staying active can help maintain a healthy weight and reduce stone risk.

Exercise Regularly

Physical activity supports overall kidney and urinary tract health. It also helps regulate body weight and metabolism, which can influence stone formation.

Monitor Medications and Supplements

Some medications and supplements can increase stone risk. For example, excess vitamin D or calcium supplements might contribute to calcium stones. Always discuss your medications and supplements with your healthcare provider.

Working with Healthcare Professionals

Because kidney stones vary widely in type and cause, personalized advice is invaluable. A nephrologist or dietitian can help tailor your diet when you have kidney stones to your specific needs. They might recommend urine tests or imaging to identify stone composition and adjust your nutrition plan accordingly.

Adjusting to a kidney stone-friendly diet can seem challenging at first, but with the right knowledge and support, it becomes a manageable and empowering journey. Remember, every small change in your eating and drinking habits can significantly impact your kidney health and comfort in the long run.

Frequently Asked Questions

What foods should I avoid if I have kidney stones?

If you have kidney stones, it's best to avoid foods high in oxalates such as spinach, beets, nuts, and chocolate. Additionally, limit salt intake and reduce consumption of animal protein to help prevent stone formation.

Can drinking more water help with kidney stones?

Yes, drinking plenty of water is one of the most effective ways to prevent kidney stones. Staying well-hydrated helps dilute the substances in urine that lead to stones, reducing the risk of formation.

Is a low-calcium diet recommended for kidney stone patients?

No, a low-calcium diet is generally not recommended because calcium binds with oxalates in the gut and prevents them from being absorbed. Instead, consume an adequate amount of dietary calcium from foods like dairy to help reduce stone risk.

Are there specific fruits and vegetables that help

prevent kidney stones?

Yes, fruits and vegetables high in citrate, such as lemons, oranges, and other citrus fruits, can help prevent kidney stones by inhibiting stone formation. Also, a diet rich in vegetables and fruits helps maintain a healthy urine pH.

Should I limit salt intake when managing kidney stones?

Yes, reducing salt intake is important because high sodium levels increase calcium excretion in urine, which can contribute to stone formation. Aim to consume less processed and salty foods to help manage kidney stones.

Can a diet low in animal protein reduce the risk of kidney stones?

Yes, reducing animal protein intake can lower the risk of kidney stones. High consumption of animal protein increases uric acid and calcium in the urine, which may lead to stone formation. Consider plant-based protein sources to minimize risk.

Additional Resources

Diet When You Have Kidney Stones: A Comprehensive Nutritional Guide

Diet when you have kidney stones plays a pivotal role in both the management and prevention of this painful condition. Kidney stones, hardened deposits of minerals and salts that form inside the kidneys, can cause severe discomfort and complications if not addressed properly. While medical treatments and interventions are critical, dietary adjustments offer a non-invasive, effective approach to reduce the risk of stone formation and promote overall renal health. This article explores the intricate relationship between diet and kidney stones, providing an analytical perspective on optimal nutritional strategies supported by current research.

Understanding Kidney Stones and Their Dietary Implications

Kidney stones are primarily composed of calcium oxalate, uric acid, struvite, or cystine, with calcium oxalate stones accounting for approximately 70-80% of cases. The formation of these stones is influenced by various factors, including genetics, hydration levels, and critically, dietary habits. A diet when you have kidney stones must be carefully calibrated to mitigate the supersaturation of stone-forming minerals in the urine.

Research indicates that dietary components can either exacerbate or alleviate the risk of stone formation. For instance, high sodium intake increases calcium excretion in urine, thereby elevating the risk of calcium-based stones. Conversely, adequate hydration dilutes urine concentration, reducing the likelihood of crystallization. Thus, adopting a tailored diet is essential for individuals diagnosed with kidney stones or those prone to recurrent episodes.

Hydration: The Cornerstone of Kidney Stone Prevention

One of the most universally recommended dietary measures when managing kidney stones is increasing fluid intake. Studies consistently show that consuming at least 2.5 to 3 liters of fluids daily can significantly reduce stone recurrence by producing more dilute urine. Water remains the best choice, but certain beverages have varying impacts:

- **Water:** Optimal for hydration without adding stone-promoting substances.
- **Citrate-rich drinks:** Lemonade and orange juice are beneficial as citrate inhibits stone formation.
- **Avoid excessive soda and sugary drinks:** These can increase the risk of stones due to high fructose and phosphoric acid content.

Maintaining consistent hydration throughout the day helps flush out minerals before they settle and crystallize, making it a foundational element of any diet when you have kidney stones.

Key Nutritional Guidelines for Managing Kidney Stones

Limiting Oxalate-Rich Foods

Oxalate is a natural compound found in many plant-based foods that can bind with calcium to form calcium oxalate stones. For patients prone to these stones, moderating oxalate intake is a crucial dietary strategy. Common high-oxalate foods include:

- Spinach

- Beets
- Rhubarb
- Nuts and nut butters
- Chocolate
- Tea

It is important to note that completely eliminating oxalate-rich foods is neither necessary nor advisable, as many of these foods provide essential nutrients. Instead, pairing oxalate-rich foods with calcium sources during meals can help bind oxalate in the gut, reducing absorption and subsequent stone formation.

Calcium Intake: Balancing Act Between Deficiency and Excess

Contrary to previous assumptions, low dietary calcium intake may actually increase the risk of kidney stones. Calcium binds to oxalate in the intestines, preventing its absorption into the bloodstream and eventual excretion in urine. Clinical studies have demonstrated that individuals consuming adequate calcium (about 1,000-1,200 mg/day from dietary sources) have a reduced incidence of stone formation compared to those with low calcium intake.

However, excessive calcium supplementation, especially without medical supervision, may increase stone risk. Therefore, a diet when you have kidney stones should emphasize obtaining calcium primarily from food sources such as dairy products, fortified plant milks, and leafy greens, rather than relying heavily on supplements.

Reducing Sodium Consumption

High sodium intake is strongly correlated with increased urinary calcium excretion, a key risk factor for calcium stones. The average American diet often exceeds the recommended sodium limit of 2,300 mg per day, largely due to processed and restaurant foods. Patients with kidney stones benefit from reducing sodium intake to:

- Minimize calcium loss in urine
- Lower the overall risk of stone formation

- Support blood pressure control, which indirectly benefits kidney health

Practical dietary modifications include cooking at home, using herbs and spices instead of salt, and carefully reading food labels to avoid hidden sodium sources.

Managing Animal Protein Consumption

Diets high in animal protein, such as red meat, poultry, and eggs, can increase the risk of kidney stones by several mechanisms:

- Increasing urinary calcium and uric acid levels
- Lowering urinary pH, which promotes uric acid stone formation
- Reducing citrate excretion, a natural inhibitor of stones

Moderation is key. Replacing some animal protein with plant-based proteins like legumes and nuts can improve the diet's protective qualities without compromising nutritional adequacy. Additionally, plant proteins tend to produce less acid load, helping maintain a urinary environment less conducive to stone formation.

Special Considerations for Different Types of Kidney Stones

Calcium Oxalate Stones

Since calcium oxalate stones are the most common, dietary recommendations emphasize oxalate restriction, adequate calcium intake, and hydration. Avoiding excessive vitamin C supplementation is also advised because vitamin C can convert to oxalate in the body, potentially increasing stone risk.

Uric Acid Stones

For uric acid stones, lowering purine intake is crucial. Purines are found in high concentrations in organ meats, shellfish, and certain fish like sardines. A diet when you have kidney stones of this type should focus on:

- Limiting high-purine foods
- Maintaining a more alkaline urine pH through diet (e.g., consuming fruits and vegetables)
- Ensuring sufficient hydration

Struvite and Cystine Stones

While diet has a less direct role in struvite and cystine stones, maintaining good hydration and working closely with healthcare providers remains essential. For cystine stones, specific medical treatments are often necessary alongside dietary strategies.

The Role of Dietary Supplements and Emerging Research

There is ongoing investigation into the effects of various supplements on kidney stone risk. For example, magnesium has been studied for its potential to inhibit stone formation by binding oxalate in the urine. Similarly, citrate supplements can raise urinary citrate levels, providing a protective effect.

However, self-prescribing supplements without medical guidance can be counterproductive or harmful. Individuals with kidney stones should consult healthcare professionals before adding any supplements to their diet.

Integrating Lifestyle and Dietary Changes for Optimal Outcomes

Dietary management of kidney stones is most effective when combined with broader lifestyle modifications. Regular physical activity, maintaining a healthy weight, and avoiding excessive intake of alcohol and caffeine contribute to reducing stone risk.

Moreover, the complexity of stone formation highlights the importance of individualized dietary advice. Factors such as stone composition, comorbid conditions, and personal preferences must be considered to create a sustainable and effective diet when you have kidney stones.

In sum, understanding the nuanced relationship between diet and kidney stones

empowers patients and healthcare providers to collaboratively develop tailored nutritional strategies. By focusing on hydration, balanced nutrient intake, and avoiding specific risk-enhancing foods, individuals can significantly influence their kidney stone outcomes and support long-term renal well-being.

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diet when you have kidney stones: Complete Guide to the Low Oxalate Diet Ella Jameson, 2024-12-10 In recent years, there has been growing awareness about the impact of diet on health, particularly when it comes to conditions like kidney stones, joint pain, and digestive issues. One dietary approach that has gained attention is the low oxalate diet, which has shown promise in managing and alleviating symptoms related to these health conditions. While many diets are designed for weight loss or improving general well-being, the low oxalate diet serves a more specific purpose—helping people reduce the intake of oxalates, a naturally occurring substance found in a variety of foods. Oxalates are compounds that bind to minerals like calcium and form crystals. In some individuals, these crystals can accumulate and lead to problems such as kidney stones, which can be painful and debilitating. The low oxalate diet, then, becomes an essential tool for managing these conditions. But it's not just for those who suffer from kidney stones. The diet has also been found to be beneficial for people who experience joint pain, digestive issues, and even certain types of inflammation. The concept of oxalates may be new to many, and it's easy to assume that all foods are safe to eat in moderation. However, some foods are higher in oxalates than others, and for those with sensitivities, even small amounts can trigger symptoms. The low oxalate diet works by eliminating or reducing the intake of foods that are high in oxalates, thus reducing the potential for crystals to form and cause harm. While this might seem restrictive at first glance, the truth is that there are still plenty of foods that are both nutritious and low in oxalates, making the diet more manageable than it may appear. In this eBook, we will explore the science behind the low oxalate diet, why it works, and how to implement it into your life. Whether you are seeking relief from health conditions related to oxalate buildup, or you simply want to understand more about this dietary approach, you'll find everything you need to know to make informed decisions about what you eat. From understanding which foods to avoid and which to embrace, to navigating social situations and dining out, this guide will provide you with the tools and knowledge to succeed. Starting a new diet can feel like a daunting task, especially when it involves a change in the foods you eat every day. However, the low oxalate diet is not just about restrictions—it's about creating a lifestyle that promotes overall health and well-being. With the right information, planning, and support, anyone can succeed on a low oxalate diet. By the end of this eBook, you will be empowered to make informed decisions about your health and diet, with a clear understanding of how to manage oxalate intake while still enjoying delicious and satisfying meals. This eBook is more than just a set of instructions—it's a comprehensive guide to living with a low oxalate lifestyle. As you read, you will learn not only about the science and health benefits behind the diet but also practical tips for meal planning, grocery shopping, and even eating out. The goal is to ensure that this dietary approach is not just something you follow temporarily, but a sustainable way to improve your health over time.

Remember, transitioning to a low oxalate diet doesn't have to be overwhelming. With the knowledge and resources provided in this eBook, you'll have everything you need to make the process smooth and enjoyable. From understanding the role of oxalates in the body to creating delicious meals that align with your new diet, you'll discover how easy and rewarding it can be to embrace a low oxalate lifestyle.

diet when you have kidney stones: The Kidney Stone Guide Pasquale De Marco, 2025-07-27 Kidney stones are a common and painful condition that can affect people of all ages. They are hard deposits of minerals and salts that form in the kidneys. While most kidney stones are small enough to pass through the urinary tract without causing any problems, larger stones can block the flow of urine and cause severe pain. In ****The Kidney Stone Guide****, Pasquale De Marco provides a wealth of information on kidney stones, including their causes, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment options. Pasquale De Marco also offers practical advice on preventing kidney stones and managing the condition if you have it. This comprehensive guide is divided into ten chapters, each of which covers a different aspect of kidney stones. The chapters are: * Understanding Kidney Stones * Treatment Options for Kidney Stones * Preventing Kidney Stones * Managing Kidney Stone Pain * Living with Kidney Stones * Special Considerations for Kidney Stone Patients * The Role of Diet in Kidney Stone Prevention * The Role of Lifestyle in Kidney Stone Prevention * When to Seek Medical Attention for Kidney Stones * Resources for Kidney Stone Patients With its clear and concise language, ****The Kidney Stone Guide**** is an essential resource for anyone who wants to learn more about this condition. Whether you are a patient, a caregiver, or simply someone who wants to be informed, this book has something for you. ****In this book, you will learn:**** * What causes kidney stones and who is at risk * The different types of kidney stones * The signs and symptoms of kidney stones * How kidney stones are diagnosed and treated * How to prevent kidney stones from forming * How to manage kidney stone pain * How to live with kidney stones if you have them * Where to find support and resources for kidney stone patients ****The Kidney Stone Guide**** is the ultimate resource for anyone who wants to learn more about this common and painful condition. With its comprehensive coverage of kidney stones, this book is an essential resource for anyone who wants to learn more about this condition. If you like this book, write a review!

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diet when you have kidney stones: *Living with Kidney Stones* Samantha Bowick, 2021-03-30 THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON TREATING KIDNEY STONES *Living with Kidney Stones* is a health resource for anyone who has ever suffered with the pain of kidney stones. One in 10 individuals will suffer from kidney stones at some point in their life. Composed of hard, painful mineral deposits forming inside the kidneys, these stones are both crippling and potentially chronic. Thankfully, patients can take action to reduce their chances of developing or redeveloping kidney stones by following a good diet, observing proper self-care, and adopting a comprehensive wellness plan. To that end, *Living with Kidney Stones* offers the most up-to-date information on this illness, paired with heartfelt insight from an actual kidney stone sufferer. *Living with Kidney Stones* also includes: • Easy-to-understand information on types and causes of kidney stones • The latest information on kidney stone testing • Traditional and alternative options for a broad, full-body

approach to wellness • Guidance on self-care techniques for patients, families and caregivers • Valuable medical and community resources for kidney stone sufferers Learning to manage your risk factors for kidney stones can seem overwhelming, but by taking everything one day at a time and making sure you're provided with the care and support you need, you can minimize your risk while maximizing your quality of life. Don't just live with kidney stones—live well.

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diet when you have kidney stones: The Complete Idiot's Guide to the TLC Diet Diane A. Welland, M.S., R.D., 2012-12-31 The TLC (Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes) Diet is a low saturated fat, low cholesterol diet that was originally designed to help high-risk patients reduce their high blood cholesterol levels, as well as lowering risk for developing heart disease and suffering future heart attacks. However, this diet isn't just for those dealing with health problems, because recent studies have also revealed that TLC happens to be one of the healthiest and best overall diets for anyone

interested in a healthier lifestyle. U.S. News and World Report recently ranked TLC as the #2 best overall diet, as well as being one of the best diets for heart healthy eating (#2) and overall healthy eating (#2). The TLC Diet was created by the National Institutes of Health's National Cholesterol Education Program and is considered a medically-sound and well-researched diet. As opposed to gimmick diets that are often debunked, this diet will be around for the long term. However, unlike other diets that offer a step-by-step plan, TLC requires effort and attention on the part of the follower for long-term success. The Complete Idiot's Guide® to the TLC Diet offers readers a structured program not only for eating and cooking for TLC success, but it offers guidance for healthy lifestyle changes that will provide a non-gimmick, medically-proven plan for anyone interested in healthy, life-changing results. Readers will learn the often confusing differences between good and bad cholesterol, how to cook and eat right to get the desired results, and how to change their lives for the better with this sound, healthy program.

diet when you have kidney stones: *DASH Diet For Dummies* Sarah Samaan, Rosanne Rust, Cindy Kleckner, 2020-10-23 Get on track to lower your blood pressure in just two weeks! Almost half of all adults in the United States have high blood pressure—but many of us are not aware of it. High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, has serious health implications. It is classified as a leading cause of premature death by the World Health Organization, contributing to strokes, heart attacks, heart failure, kidney failure, and even dementia. While medications are often necessary to keep blood pressure in the safe zone, a judicious dietary and lifestyle overhaul will greatly help manage your blood pressure and your overall heart health. Written in an easy-to-follow, friendly style by three heart and nutrition experts, *DASH Diet For Dummies* shows you how increasing fiber, vitamins, and minerals, along with reducing your sodium intake when needed, can lower your blood pressure in just two weeks! Ranked the #1 Best Diet for Healthy Eating as well as #2 Best Diets Overall by U.S. News & World Report, the DASH Diet is specifically aimed at relieving hypertension and is endorsed by the American Heart Association, The National Heart, Blood, and Lung Institute, and the Mayo Clinic—and is also proven to be effective against conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, PCOS, and more. Improve heart health with lower blood pressure Reduce cholesterol Lose weight Follow simple, tasty recipes So, don't let hypertension scare you. Along with good medical care, the DASH diet makes lowering your blood pressure achievable - and tasty! By following the straightforward meal plans and trying out our favorite recipes in *DASH Diet for Dummies*, you'll set yourself on the fast, proven journey to better blood pressure - and be on your way to a healthy and heart-smart future!

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diet when you have kidney stones: *Smoothies for Kidney Health* Victoria L. Hulett, JD, Jennifer L. Waybright, RN, 2015-04-07 *Smoothies for Kidney Health* is a very special recipe book. It is expertly put together by a kidney donor, who is a registered nurse, and her mom, the recipient of her kidney. Together, they have taken their knowledge and experience to create a resource for all

those suffering from chronic kidney disease (CKD). By explaining how kidney function is impacted by the foods we eat, they offer a simple way for patients to help slow down, stop, or possibly reverse the many effects of CKD—including heart disease, the number one killer of kidney patients. The vital information provided in *Smoothies for Kidney Health*, along with eighty luscious smoothie recipes, is designed to offer help to all patients at any stage of CKD. After presenting readers with a basic summary of kidney functions, the book explains the relationship between our standard diet choices and the ever-growing epidemic of CKD—as well as each of its common causes. Utilizing and referencing the most current research studies, the book clearly shows how certain foods can speed deterioration of kidney function, resulting in dialysis and early death. The book then discusses how to prevent or slow progression of CKD by altering diet, again supported by the most current research studies and footnoted. These sections also were reviewed and approved by a leading nephrologist and a cardiologist. Following these explanation sections are eighty (80) kitchen-tested smoothies containing the very ingredients scientifically shown to protect and improve kidney function. Each recipe includes helpful health promoting facts designed for the issues facing kidney patients. All renal diet smoothies are renal dietitian reviewed and approved. The recipes are divided into three sections to allow readers to select those recipes most appropriate for their stage of CKD. Section One highlights the key ingredients that can help slow CKD progression, lower proteinuria, eliminate acidosis, decrease uric acid levels, and otherwise aid the health of the kidneys and the kidney patient. The second section is designed for individuals who must alter their intake of potassium and/or phosphorus because of the inability of their malfunctioning kidneys to stabilize blood levels of those minerals. The last section provides dialysis patients smoothies with a focus is on heart health, improving stamina and survival, and minimizing common dialysis side effects. The reader will also find valuable suggestions throughout the book that will help kidney patient deal with their most common problems at each stage. Once a diagnosis is made, kidney patients often want to know what they can do to improve their condition. The basic food suggestions offered in this book are within a patient's control in what is otherwise an uncontrollable and devastating disease. *Smoothies for Kidney Health* offers the hope and the help to aid kidney patients become part of the solution to improving their overall health.

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Whether he is revealing how to beat high cholesterol with blueberries, combat hot flashes with black beans, bash blood sugar spikes with almonds, or help relieve agonizing back pain with pineapple, Dr. Duke's food remedies help treat and prevent the whole gamut of health concerns, from minor (such as sunburn and the common cold) to more serious (like arthritis and diabetes). Dr. Duke has assigned a rating to each remedy, according to his evaluation of the available scientific studies and anecdotal reports. Many of the healing foods recommended here are proving so effective that they may outperform popular pharmaceuticals—minus the risk (and cost).

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