



Kidney Stones: Prevention & Treatment

North Carolina is one of the numerous states located in the “Stone Belt,” meaning we have a high incidence of urinary stones due to the hot weather and dehydration.

So what are kidney stones, and what do you do if you have them? Brandon Rubens, MD, with [WakeMed Physician Practices – Urology](#), shared answers to these questions and more.

Treatment for Kidney Stones

- If a stone is <5 mm, there is a 90 percent chance it will pass without surgical intervention
- Alpha-blockades are used to help stones pass
- If the stone is not caught when it passes, a follow-up image is needed to confirm it passed
- Long-term obstruction can lead to renal dysfunction
- Surgery

Preventing Kidney Stones

You can prevent kidney stones by staying hydrated and limiting the amount of salt (sodium) in your diet.


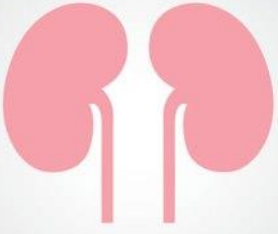
Signs You May Need Surgery

In some cases, you may need surgery for your kidney stones if you experience any of the following:

- Intractable pain
- Intractable nausea/vomiting and inability to stay hydrated
- Obstruction of a solitary kidney
- Infection/fever (this is serious and can be life-threatening if not treated)

Did You Know

- Up to 12% of the population has kidney stones
- Once you've had them, there's a 50% chance of recurrence
- Calcium oxalate is most common stone found
- Other stones associated with infections & diseases: uric acid, struvite, calcium phosphate and cystine



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Surgical Options for Kidney Stones

Currently, we offer several surgical options for kidney stones. These include the following. Speak with your urologist to determine whether you are a candidate for surgery.

Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy

- Calcium stones are typically treated with this procedure
- Sound waves are used to break up stone and make it easier to pass

Ureteroscopy

- Try to locate the stone and trap it

Percutaneous Nephrostolithotomy

- More invasive procedure that is typically used on stones bigger than 2 cm

Kidney Stone Center

[The Kidney Stone Center at WakeMed](#) is a 24-hour service available for those who think they might be passing a stone. If you think you are passing a stone, you can contact our stone center at 919-350-ROCK. Our goal is to help you navigate your medical condition and try to have you avoid an Emergency Department visit. We can answer questions for you, offer advice, and typically get you into the office quite quickly.

Reach the Kidney Stone Center by calling: [919-350-ROCK\(7625\)](tel:919-350-ROCK).

About Brandon Rubens, MD

Dr. Brandon Rubens is urologist with [WakeMed Physician Practices – Urology](#). Dr. Rubens' clinical expertise lies in robotic and laparoscopic surgery, urologic cancer (prostate, kidney and bladder cancer) and general urology, including prostate enlargement, urinary incontinence, erectile dysfunction, blood in the urine and kidney stones.

Request an appointment with Dr. Rubens today.