



Patient Information

Low purine diet

This leaflet provides dietary information that will help prevent kidney stone formation.

What are purines and why are they important?

Purines are natural substances found in all of the body's cells and many foods (especially offal, anchovies, mackerel and sardines). When cells die and get recycled the purines, found in their genetic material, also get broken down. Uric acid is the chemical formed when purines have been broken down completely.

It is normal for uric acid to be formed in the body. However, too much uric acid can lead to problems including kidney stones.

Avoiding foods that are high in purines can help people lower their uric acid levels and help prevent kidney stones.

Important general advice

- Avoid high-purine foods (see below)
- Avoid or limit alcohol (21 units per week for men and 14 units per week for women)
- Limit meat intake to 3 oz (85 grams) per meal
- Limit high-fat foods such as salad dressings, ice cream, cream, fried foods, muffins and biscuits. Fat holds onto uric acid in your kidneys
- If you are overweight lose weight gradually. Rapid weight loss can increase uric acid levels

Foods high in purines

The following foods are high in purines and should be avoided or reduced in your diet:

- anchovies
- brains
- kidneys
- liver
- heart
- sweetbreads
- all animal meat
- gravy
- sardines
- herring
- mackerel
- scallops
- mussels
- asparagus
- cauliflower
- kidney beans
- lentils
- mushrooms
- spinach
- peas

Will I get another kidney stone if I follow this advice?

You may still get another stone, but your chances are reduced.