



ALIVE & KICKING

How to avoid or treat urinary crystals

Your urine's pH can change based on what you eat and drink, usually ranging from 4.5 to 8. This balance is kept in check by your kidneys. Eating lots of meat and cranberry juice can make your urine more acidic, especially when there's a lot of sodium involved. On the other hand, a diet heavy in fruits and veggies, like a vegetarian diet, can make it more alkaline.

If you have a urostomy, it's important to keep an eye on your urine's pH. Doctors often recommend keeping it on the acidic side to avoid mineral buildup that can form gritty, white urinary crystals. These crystals can irritate and even cause bleeding around the stoma and skin near it. So, understanding and managing your urine's pH is key for your comfort and health.

Keeping your urine acidic is key to stopping urinary crystals before they start. The good news is, there are some simple ways to monitor your urine. Staying hydrated is crucial; aim for about 8-10 glasses of water a day, more if you're active, in a hot climate, or feeling under the weather. If your pee is clear or light yellow, you're on the right track.

Making some small changes in your diet can also help keep things acidic. Make sure you're still eating lots of fruits and veggies, but also mix in some meat, beans, fish, prunes, coffee, cereals, and plums. A glass of cranberry juice a day can also swap out more alkaline options like orange juice, helping you maintain that healthy pH balance.

If you do end up with urinary crystals, don't panic. They can be uncomfortable but treating them is straightforward. Mix equal parts warm water and white vinegar, then gently rinse your stoma with it after removing your urostomy pouch and any skin prep.

A warm, vinegar-soaked compress applied for a few minutes can dissolve the crystals and soothe irritation. After, just rinse with warm water and go about your usual pouch routine. This simple treatment can make a big difference in your comfort and health.



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