

I read an interesting article online the other day and I thought I would share it with you. The original article was published in the New York Times. The topic is about the surprising rise in the cases of kidney stones in the U.S. What is most surprising about this phenomenon is that it is happening in children as young as 5.

Doctors used to see a child with a case of kidney stones every few months. Now they are seeing cases once a week.

The question, of course, is why? You may recall that recently the chemical compound melamine was found contaminating milk and milk products manufactured in China. It was found that food manufacturers were using melamine to improve the color of watered down milk. One of the side effects of the contamination was the creation of kidney stones in children.

Experts in the U.S. believe that one of the causes of the increase in kidney stones in children is salt. That's right, the most common food additive in the U.S. Stones form in the kidneys when substances in the urine crystalize. The two most common reasons is not drinking enough fluids and eating too much salt.

Many of the foods children eat today are loaded with salt. Fast food, snack foods, canned vegetables and soups are full of salt. Even most chicken available in grocery stores is injected with a salt solution.

There is also evidence that the sugar in soda is a contributing factor in the development of stones.

Very few children today drink enough water according to Dr. Alicia Neu, the medical director of pediatric nephrology at Johns Hopkins. She believes that drinking more water is the most important step in preventing kidney stones.

Children in the South tend to be especially susceptible and there are some experts who believe that obesity is a contributing factor.

Once again, it has been shown that our lifestyle choices are a significant factor in the development of disease. I would like to recommend that if you have children, encourage them to drink more water, eat less fast food and eat fewer processed foods. Read the sodium content and try to buy products that have lower values. The closer the food is to the way it is found in nature, generally the healthier it will be for you and your children.

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