



# Health Matters

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The prevalence of kidney stones has been growing significantly over the past thirty years. Occurring more frequently in men than women, kidney stones tend to affect those who are more susceptible due to a family history or certain metabolic disorders.

Diet can also play a role in the formation of kidney stones, due to either a deficiency of magnesium or an excess of purines and/or oxalates found in foods such as red meat, dairy, tea, spinach and chocolate. It's vital to avoid dehydration by drinking plenty of water, as well.

Indigenous people of the Amazon rainforest have used an herb for generations that they call "**Stone breaker**" (Chanca piedra) not only to help expel kidney stones, but to actually block them from forming. In 1999, researchers confirmed that Chanca piedra was shown to have an inhibitory effect on the formation of calcium-oxalate crystals (the building blocks of most kidney stones). Today, it's available in a liquid extract.

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