

GREELEY DOCTOR DISCUSSES TREATMENT OF KIDNEY STONES

By Jason Webb
For THRIVENC

Statistics from the National Kidney Foundation show that more than half a million Americans visit the emergency department each year because of problems associated with kidney stones. One Banner Health urologist says simple changes in diet can help reduce the risk.

Dr. Jay Paddack, from the Banner Health Clinic

specializing in urology, 5890 13th St. in Greeley, specializes in general urologic conditions and more complex issues men and women may face. Kidney stones are among the conditions he treats.

Paddack describes kidney stones as a solid piece of material formed by an excess of certain minerals in the urine, most commonly calcium. Stones vary in size and composition and can form anywhere throughout the urinary tract.

“Certain factors can increase the likelihood of forming kidney stones,” Paddack said. “Those include low fluid intake, diet, obesity, age, gender, a personal or family history of stones.”

Additionally, Paddack said certain medications, including acetazolamide and indinavir, and certain medical problems, such as diabetes, Crohn’s disease and others, can increase the risk of kidney stones. Anyone who has had previous intestinal surgery,

like gastric bypass, is more susceptible, and any blockage of the urinary tract can lead to stone formation.

While kidney stones have typically affect-

accompanied by chills.

To test for kidney stones, doctors may request a urine sample to analyze and look for an infection. Tests might include a urinalysis and/

to treat kidney stones. The first is called shockwave lithotripsy, which uses sound waves focused on the stone to break it into small, easily passable fragments.

A second option, called ureteroscopy, uses a small scope inserted into the ureter through the urethra and bladder to visualize the stone. It can then be broken into pieces with a laser and grasped with small instruments.

For large stones in the kidney, doctors may use the third option, percutaneous nephrolithotomy. With this procedure, the doctor makes a small incision in the back and inserts a scope directly into the kidney. The stone can then be broken up and removed with special instruments.

Additionally, urologists may prescribe medications to minimize stone formation. “These medications alter the levels of certain substances commonly associated with stones that are present in the urine,” Paddack said.

Fortunately, Paddack said not all stones need to be treated. Stones which remain stable in size can just be observed. This can delay the use of surgical procedures until they become large enough to cause problems.

Jason Webb is a public relations specialist for Banner Health.

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— DR. JAY PADDACK, Banner Health Clinic

ed men more than 30 years old, the incidence of women and younger people having stones is on the rise, Paddack said. Diets high in salt, fat and protein and elevated obesity rates has raised the frequency of women and young people developing kidney stones, according to Paddack.

Diet change and an increase in fluid intake can help reduce the risk of developing stones. Paddack recommends people drink two to three liters of water every day, or enough to keep the urine light yellow to a clear shade.

“Testing for kidney stones is typically only done after one goes to the doctor’s office or emergency room with severe, fluctuating pain in the back that radiates to the abdomen and groin,” Paddack said. Additional symptoms may include bloody urine, nausea and vomiting, frequent urination that may be difficult and fever that may also be

or urine culture to look for infection. Blood tests can also identify serious infection and show how well the kidneys are working.

Doctors likely will order some form of imaging study to determine if and where kidney stones are present. The most effective option is a non-contrast computerized tomography scan, or CT scan, which can show the size and location of almost all stones. Other alternative imaging studies include X-rays and ultrasounds which may be less precise.

“Kidney stones can become problematic when they begin to pass through the urinary tract, causing severe pain, urine obstruction and sometimes infection,” Paddack said. “Although most stones will pass through the urinary tract on their own, sometimes surgical procedures are necessary to remove them.”

Doctors have three primary surgical options

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