



Kidney Chi Deficiency

Healing the Structural System by Strengthening the Kidneys

When most people think of the kidneys, they think only in terms of the fluids of the body. However, the kidneys don't just regulate fluid balance in the body, they also help to regulate mineral electrolyte balance.

In Chinese medicine, the kidneys are said to build the bones, so a weakness in the kidney energy (kidney chi deficiency) is linked to problems like low back pain, neck pain, muscle stiffness, weakness of the knees and ankles, bone spurs, calcium deposits, and inflammatory joint diseases like rheumatism and arthritis. When one understands the role of the kidneys better, the reason for this connection becomes obvious.

The primary job of the urinary system is to filter the blood and remove toxins (especially acid waste). The kidneys also help to maintain the balance between mineral electrolytes (salts of calcium, magnesium, potassium and sodium) and water in the system. Too much fluid and insufficient electrolytes lead to water retention and lymphatic stagnation. Too many minerals and insufficient fluids lead to stiffness and tissue atrophy.

Uric acid accumulation in the body due to poor kidney function can lead to stiffness, gout, gouty arthritis, rheumatic-like conditions kidney inflammation, and kidney stones. Acid accumulation can also lead to calcium deposits in the tissues and can be a contributing factor in the development of heart disease.

People with blue eyes having a whitish plaque over the surface of the iris fibers are showing evidence of this acid accumulation. People with this eye pattern may have a history of suppressing skin eliminations. This type is also associated with an increased risk of inflammatory conditions including arthritis and neuritis. They often experience a great deal of muscle stiffness.

When the kidneys are unable to efficiently filter acid waste from the system, the body may "borrow" magnesium and potassium from muscles and connective tissues and calcium from bones to keep the pH of the blood stable. This can cause muscle tension and stiffness that creates back problems, neck and shoulder pain, and weakness in the knees and ankles. This also makes the person more prone to arthritis, gout, rheumatism, stiffness, back and neck pain and headaches.

An alkaline diet is very important for people with a tendency to acid retention and kidney weakness. Alkalizing foods include most fruits and vegetables. Acid forming foods include all forms

of meat and fish, grains, nuts, legumes and cheese. Soda pop and coffee should be severely curtailed or eliminated, as these substances are very acid-forming and stressful to the kidneys.

Drinking adequate amounts of pure water is also helpful. This helps dilute acid waste and gives the kidneys more fluids to work with in filtering toxins from the blood.

KB-C is a Chinese herbal formula that specifically addresses the problem of kidney chi deficiency. It strengthens the ability of the kidneys to flush acid waste from the tissues. It helps maintain spinal alignment (which has earned it the nickname "The Herbal Chiropractor") and is useful for weak knees and ankles, muscle stiffness, arthritis, gout and rheumatism.

HSN-W is another formula that strengthens both the kidneys and the bones. Horsetail, a key ingredient in this formula is a urinary herb that is also rich in silica, a mineral which improves strength and resiliency in structural tissues. Single herbs that aid the body in flushing acid waste and strengthening the structural system include eucommia, nettles, goldenrod, cleavers, Dandelion and gravel root.

Where fluid retention is present, the person may need diuretic herbs to flush fluids from the tissues via the lymphatics and kidneys. Lymphatic Drainage Formula is also helpful in improving kidney function to flush acid waste from tissues, in addition to being helpful in promoting lymphatic flow.

Many people take calcium supplements in an attempt to alkalize the system. While this has a temporary buffering effect on acids, calcium (and especially coral calcium), by itself does not really correct the problem. Coral calcium will raise the levels of free calcium in the blood and the kidneys will endeavor to flush this excess calcium through the urine. This makes the urine pH higher (more alkaline), but it is taxing to the kidneys and may increase the risk of kidney stones and calcium deposits. This is why the herbal remedies, mentioned earlier, are the best choice.

This is just an introduction to the connection between kidney health and the health of the bones and structural system. For additional information on dealing with these problems, consult your local herb specialist. Additional information on strengthening the urinary and structural systems can also be found in *The Comprehensive Guide to Nature's Sunshine Products, Practical Iridology* and *The ABC+D Approach to Natural Health*.

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