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November 11-13: ASN Management Office, San Diego Convention Center, Room 14, (619) 525-6307
Friday, Nov. 14 – Monday, Nov. 17, 2003: ASN Media Room, San Diego Convention Ctr., Room 13,
(619) 525-6301 (media room), 240-381-7513 (after hours)

DIETARY CALCIUM CAN REDUCE RISK OF KIDNEY STONES AMONG YOUNG WOMEN, CONTRARY TO PREVIOUS BELIEFS

New Study Shows Diet Can Prevent Kidney Stones

San Diego, CA (Nov. 16, 2003)— Young women can prevent kidney stones, a painful disorder that affects one in ten Americans and typically first strikes between the ages of 20 and 40, by eating foods high in calcium, according to the new study presented at the American Society of Nephrology's 36th Annual Meeting and Scientific Exposition in San Diego, California. The new findings challenge the long-held assumption that calcium increases the risk of kidney stone development among young women.

"This research shows for the first time that diet plays a significant role in the development of kidney stones among young women," says Gary Curhan, MD, Brigham and Women's Hospital's lead investigator on this study. It is the first prospective study examining the association between diet and the risk of kidney stone formation among young women.

In addition to calcium, the study shows that phytate, a naturally occurring component of whole grains and vegetables, and fluid intake also reduced the risk of kidney stones. On the contrary, high sugar intake was found to increase the risk of kidney stones among young women. The research also shows that young women who take calcium supplements did not appear to have an increased risk of kidney stones.

Researchers examined the dietary factors and the risk of incident symptomatic kidney stones over an eight-year period among more than 96,000 women between the ages of 27 and 44, who had no previous history of kidney stones. Self-administered food frequency questionnaires were used to estimate the average intake of over 100 different nutrients in 1991 and 1995. During the eight-year study, there were 1,233 women who developed kidney stones.

The study found that young women who consumed the highest intake of calcium from foods over an eight-year period had a 27% lower risk of developing a kidney stone, compared to those who consumed less dietary calcium.

The research is part of the Nurse's Health Study II, one of the largest prospective investigations into the risk factors for major chronic diseases in women. The study also shows that several risk factors for kidney stone formation vary between younger and older women. A prior study found that older women who had greater intakes of dietary calcium, potassium, and fluids, reduced the risk of stone formation, while supplemental calcium, sodium, and sucrose increased the risk. In contrast,

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the new study found that younger women had no associated risks in developing kidney stones with potassium, supplemental calcium, sodium, and animal protein intakes.

A kidney stone is a hard mass developed from crystals that separates from the urine and builds up on the inner surfaces of the kidney. In 1999, more than a quarter million hospitalized patients had been diagnosed with kidney stones. Once a person develops a kidney stone, other stones are likely to develop.

The study abstract, "*Dietary Factors and the Risk of Incident Kidney Stones in Younger Women (Nurses Health Study II)*" will be available for poster viewing from 9:30 am-3:30 pm on Sunday, November 16 in the Exhibit Hall (Halls A/B/C) of the San Diego Convention Center. Dr. Curhan will be present at the poster from 1:00 pm-3:00 pm on Sunday.

As the largest nephrology meeting of its kind, Renal Week 2003 is expected to draw more than 11,000 nephrologists to reveal the latest findings in renal research and in the care of patients with kidney and related disorders. The ASN is a not-for-profit organization of 9,000 physicians and scientists dedicated to the study and practice of nephrology and committed to providing a forum for discussion about the latest research and clinical findings on kidney diseases.

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