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INTERNATIONAL

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Testimonials on Passing Kidney Stones

Written by Frank Cook
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Herbs and Foods Used:

Corn (*Zea*) silk infusion
Joe-pye-weed (*Eupatorium*) root decoction
Black Cohosh (*Cimicifuga*) tincture of root
Wild Yam (*Dioscorea*) tincture of root
Dandelion (*Taraxacum*) tincture of root
Uva Ursi (*Arctostaphylos*) tincture of leaves
Ipecac (*Cephaelis*) homeopathic pills
Nux Vomica homeopathic pills
Copperhead venom (*Lachesis mutus*) homeopathic pills
Sassafras (same) chewed leaves
Yarrow (*Achillea*) leaves in tincture combo
Nettles (*Urtica*) leaves in tincture combo
Usnea (same) whole lichen in tincture combo
Raw Honey

Therapies:

Herbalism
Acupressure
Creative visualization
Reiki
Homeopathy
Crystal Therapy

I take the time to write this in hopes of offering additional insights to those who suffer from kidney stones as well as those who assist people who suffer from them. I passed kidney stones over a 6-7 hour period on August 6th, 2004. My first related memory is from an hour or two before the kidney pain when I remember feeling discomfort in my left testicle. I could not figure out what it was first guessing it was a hernia. When lunch came I got a big plate of food and sat down but was unable to get comfortable. I was eating quickly (I guess part of me knew I was going down and wanted to get in nutrients and seek comfort). But soon I could not eat or sit still. All abilities to maintain a calm reality were fading quickly. I washed my plate and sought a grassy area to recline in the shade. My kidney pain started and immediately I thought, "I am passing kidney stones." But I was not sure. At first the pain would come and go. I was at a big gathering and a friend, Goodheart, sat down to talk to me about something but soon I needed to let him know my situation. He asked what

he could do to help and soon brought me cornsilk tea. This felt good but the pain was growing more frequent. Others began to engage me. Kim and Robert went off to dig some joe-pye-weed (*Eupatorium*). More and more people got word of what was going on and many checked in. I appreciated the concern and accepted some of the offers to help. Keith was helpful using some acupuncture points on my feet. Chris did reiki and energy healing. The pain was such that I threw up several times emptying everything in my stomach. I was encouraged to drink water (which I threw up). One person touched a sore spot on my back and had a whole story about thinking he had kidney stones and found out his back was out of adjustment. I thought about this for a while but on feeling the kind of pain I was in, I felt confident it was stones. One would come out of my left kidney in spurts and starts tear its way down my ureter then over my left pelvic area and into my bladder. My consciousness would slip in and out of focus. I would visualize the stone moving down and focus on breathing energy and relaxation into that part of my body. This is one of the most important aspects of my healing in this experience. I tried eating watermelon but also threw that up. Kim and Robert returned with the *Eupatorium* root ball and went off to decoct a tea. They left me some rootlets to chew on. I enjoyed its aromaticness and energy. When the tea came back I drank it as much as I could. This seemed to work well for an hour or so, but as the stones kept coming I got it into my head that maybe *Eupatorium* was a stimulant to moving out the kidney stones. At that time passing more stones seemed unappealing so I discontinued.

More and more suggestions of herbs and techniques to try were offered. Many I said no thank you to. I needed a pain reliever. I asked for some Ghostpipe (*Monotropa*) but there was none. I did try some tinctures—Black Cohosh, Wild Yam, Dandelion, Uva Ursi.... Some made me throw up, others went down but did not seem to help much. After a couple of hours I was able to get up long enough to hobble over to Cindy's home where she was gracious enough to make a bed for me to moan and wretch in pain in. Corinna came in the afternoon and applied some energy healing by holding my head—this was soothing and relaxing. Chris brought by a big crystal friend, Rosy, for me to hold.

Ganja had no interest to me until perhaps 4+ hours into it. I did not want to be distracted from what was happening. Each stone made the same journey—some more painful than others. I felt over a dozen of them make their way from my kidney into my bladder.

Cindy's sister, Susan, a homeopath, was called. She asked me all sorts of bizarre questions (as homeopaths do!) and came up with a few constitutional remedies. Two I tried had momentary effects (*Ipecac* and *Nux Vomica*) but nothing more. I was suffering from chills and a cooling core temperature by the time I had gotten to the bed. This did not subside despite a blanket. Alexis was by my side a lot of the time and did her best to be attentive to my needs. She went out and gathered *Sassafras* leaves which I chewed and felt some relief with.

I did not urinate for a long time. When I finally did I caught the urine but did not see stones despite looking at a couple of quarts of fluid. With the taking of the third homeopathic remedy, copperhead venom (*Lachesis*), I immediately felt a warming calm come over my body. Urinating and taking this remedy marked a turning point six hours into it.

There are several tinctures I went back to—Dandelion root (apparently helps dissolve stones) and a combination called Bladder Blend (Usnea, Nettles, Yarrow) which felt good and minimized my chance of infection. I did eventually partake in some Cannabis which helped me to relax and rest. I also ate some raw honey which felt good. I continued to drink a lot of water. Though I felt better I was fearful that more stones might come out so I kept it low key through the night and the next morning. Before I slept I ate some miso soup and bread which felt good. By late morning I decided to re-engage the gathering and everything flowed well from then on. I never did see stones come out.

There have been lots of discussions as to why this happened. I read the Merck Manual and my symptoms were classic for kidney stones. It said that 70% of stones are calcium-oxalate-based. This made me think about Oxalic acid in foods I eat which is known to bond with calcium. I sensed that the stones were old from earlier in life. So why did they come out then? The most understandable explanation to me is that over the previous two days I was part of a fermentation playshop. In addition to trying lots of ferments, I ended up drinking over two quarts of Kombucha tea (the bi-product of a matrix of bacteria and yeast). Later I found out this is a broad spectrum antibiotic and is often used at one to two ounces a day. It seems my mega-dosing may have brought on the rapid cleansing of my kidney—bring on the healing crisis.

Now a few months later I do notice my kidneys more which is not a bad thing. I just feel more tuned into them.

Thank you to all those mentioned above and all those others who helped me directly or through prayers. I am reminded in the adage, “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.” I also have a clear understanding of what “gripping pain” means. The path of the healer is a tough one. Life teaches us wisdom through experience. This experience will help me to better aid others in future situations of a similar nature.

Blessed Be! Glad to be pain free!!
Frank Cook
Nov, 2004

Kidney Stones Revisited May 2, 2005

Giving Birth to Crystals

I had only been home a day after two busy weeks teaching in the mountains (which contributed to my disposition through periods of dropping my core temperature out in the elements combined with some dehydration and a lot of wild greens [and possibly a little poisoning from dogbane]). Also a contributing factor was emotional stress from tension in some of my close relations.

Around 7:00 pm I felt pain in my pelvic area bad enough that I had to leave dinner and lie down on the couch. I drank peppermint tea to try and ease the discomfort which I felt was digestive related. I believed it was a blockage in my descending colon. I even went as far as to have an enema (thank you, Alan) before accepting that I was indeed passing kidney stones. I threw up all the food in my stomach.

There was a sense of losing control and then surrendering. I appreciate how my family around me accepted where I was at and did what they could to ease my pain.

I moaned and groaned for a while on the couch. Then I took a hot shower which helped a lot. I could feel each stone moving down the ureter of my same left kidney. Several calls were made to an herbalist, a homeopath, and an MD for guidance. Julia, an herbalist and homeopath, returned the call around midnight and gave us a list of homeopathic suggestions. (We unfortunately had none of them.) We did have Lachesis which had helped as a constitutional remedy before. I tried it and once again felt the warming of my body and its return to balance (but the first time I was at the end of the journey and this time it was in the middle so I could still feel the stones passing.) I kept drinking water. (Thank you, Beth for your wonderful bedside manner)

Eventually everyone went to sleep and I was left alone with myself and my guardians and demons. It was a long night between the worlds taking creative visualization to new levels.

I had been given a recommendation of strong black tea with sugar. I hesitated to do this for two reasons. One concern was that the caffeine and sugar would wire me. Secondly, I was concerned that the tannins would create more pain. But eventually I tried it and it stopped the kidney stones from coming out as promised. But also there were several stones that seemed stuck in my contracted ureter. Eventually they made their way out except for one which seemed lodged in my pelvic area. In this state I had to face my fears of hospitals, surgery, et cetera for a couple of hours before getting myself up to move around a little bit. Then I went into the hot shower/bath again which brought about some relief.

In the early morning twilight I went into our tincture cabinet for some herbs to help me sleep and repair my ureter—poppy, a liver tonic, Usnea, Graperoot.... Then I slept several hours. When I awoke I was out of pain but still felt off. I drank some water and slept again. This time I awoke feeling much better.

I collected my urine in the night and in the morning sun could see shimmering crystal flakes floating about, though none were big enough to accumulate on the bottom. Upon recommendation I swooshed some urine around in my mouth (which tasted very ambrosic)—though I did not drink or soak my feet in it (this was also recommended). Claudia came by later and massaged my feet. The foot on the side of the stones was sensitive and sore and had crystals there that she broke up. The other foot felt normal.

Once again I was humbled by this kind of experience. I have since read a lot about kidney stones (see a few sources below). I have learned that 70% of crystals are calcium oxalate. Men are twice as likely as women to get stones. I am left wondering whether the crystals were new or old? I acknowledge the importance of stress level, emotional crisis, and proper diet and hydration. I am concerned with how quickly people want to rely on x-rays, hospitals, and synthetic medicine as though they are without risk and the best solutions. Creative visualization and breath are so important.

I am thankful for my family present and the support group around. Praise Be!

FC
June, 2005

Some recommended references:

“The Green Pharmacy” by James Duke
“Vital Male” by Stephen Buhner
“The Male Herbal” by James Green
“The Merck Manual”

Kidney Crystal Report #3: Too Much of a Good Thing
November 1st, 2006

Over the past 10 days I have passed crystals on three occasions. On Friday (Oct 21) I passed two kidney stones. This passing coincided with my mother going into heart surgery (I was unaware of this. The first time I passed kidney stones was one and a half years ago also when my mother went into heart surgery. A naturopathic doctor noted that the kidneys hold the jing—our passed on energy from our relatives.) On Monday (24th) from 3:00 am to 5:00 pm I passed many more—perhaps 60-70. Humbling to say the least. And over the last 24 hours I’ve passed another 15 or so.

I feel from these experiences some deeper understanding has precipitated of why I have had this condition several times over the last 1 1/2 years. The patterns of my earlier experiences continue to be ring true: they come at the end of a period of lots of teaching, some emotional relationship stress. In addition I re-injured a space in the center under my foot that I had hurt as a teenager and when massaging this area I can feel it in my kidney. All this and more reminds me how interrelated the body is from within and throughout. Also I am more and more aware all the many conditions contribute to there being a physical expression in the body.

From the title of this writing please do not think for a moment I am referring to the kidney stones being a good thing. What I am referring to here is over-mineralization of the body. I feel this is at the core of my condition. I had already begun to consider powders in my body—like vitamins and emergencyC—as being something I needed to be cautious with. But in the translucent state of awareness brought on from my recent pain I saw how in the last few years I had begun to incorporate mineral dense power foods more and more into my diet (especially when I am teaching). When I am traveling out in the world these rich foods are important, but in my opulent lifestyle, I believe these dense foods push me over the top. (Think about salination of the soil as an analogy). I am beginning to learn that some minerals (like iron in men) have a hard time leaving the body. So in this over-mineral rich state, when conditions are “right” (mineral imbalances, bonding agents (like oxalates), body system imbalances, physical and emotional stresses) crystallization happens and the body removes them as best it can.

So what mineral rich foods am I talking about? Some fermentations like kimchi, miso, pickles; also, spirulina; nutritional yeast; tahini; seaweeds; sea salt (and heavily salted foods), protein/energy powders added to smoothies and the like, et cetera. I would also add mineral rich water from springs, wells, and bottles. I am in NO WAY saying that these are bad or unhealthy foods. They are some of the great

gifts to humans IN MODERATION. We would not have survived as a species without them.

How much is a moderate amount? I am not sure. I know some minerals are called trace minerals. I remember that in normal conditions the body needs about 1 tsp of salt a day. I know very little about all this and would appreciate any insights you might have. I will do more research on this as time allows. Along those lines I began only drinking distilled water in the last few hours of my big episode and felt it helped.

In addition to these thoughts, let me relay some of the medicines and techniques I used. Once again creative visualization and breath are keys to having those crystals move along. Hot showers are incredibly helpful when the pain gets intense. I had one tincture formula with Hydrangea in it that I initially used but felt it was encouraging the stones to keep coming out. (I need to look more into the gravel/stone roots—Eupatoriums, Collinsonia, Hydrangea, etc to understand better their actions.) Then I went with a formula of 2 parts wild yam (smooth muscle relaxant); 2 parts black cohosh (pain) and 1 part Slippery Elm (mucilaginous) which I found helpful in doses of several dropper fulls. I drank black tea which did stop the flow of stones for an hour or two, but I could still feel in the kidney an irritation of wanting to release its burden which it did when the tannins wore off. (This seems like a good case of how a medicine can become a poison if over used as I understand that black tea contains oxalates.)

I spread wintergreen oil from my kidney down to my bladder and this gave enough relief that I was able to sleep for several hours. The tea of goldenrod did an excellent job of warming my shivering body but also stimulated my kidneys. The healing hands of Claudia on my foot and my kidney were comforting. And in that sensitive state I could really feel her channeling the Reiki energy. It is very important to stay hydrated and encourage urination.

So hopefully these insights I have gained in this latest round will spare me future experiences with passing kidney crystals. Though it is hard to form the word “thankful” for my experiences, I do appreciate the insights I have gained into pain and the humility it has taught (always good for a white guy to cultivate.) Please share with me any ideas you have around this topic. May sharing these experiences spare some people the fear of treading into the unknown should this happen to them.

FCC