

## The Urinary System - Part 1

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### **What Does the Urinary System Consist of?**

2 Kidneys  
2 Ureters  
2 sphincter muscles  
Bladder  
Urethra

### **What are Their Functions?**

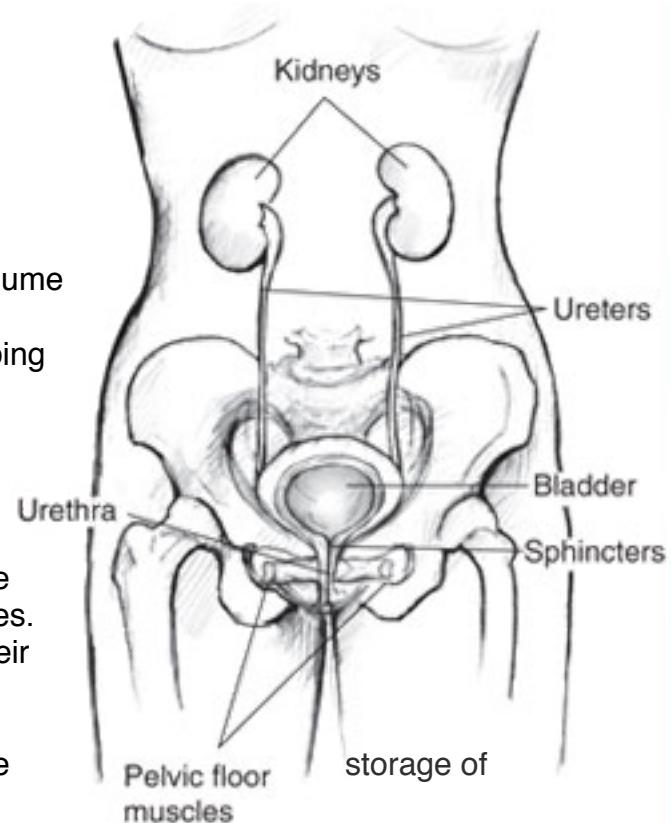
*Kidneys* - filtering of the blood, controlling blood volume and blood pressure by removing water and solute, regulating electrolytes and metabolites by reabsorbing sodium, phosphorus and potassium and controlling blood pH by excreting selected amounts of various wastes. Kidneys also produce 3 important hormones: erythropoietin (EPO) which stimulates bone marrow to make red blood cells; renin, which regulates blood pressure; calcitriol, the active form of vit. D which helps maintain calcium for bones.

*Ureters* - use peristalsis to move the urine along their lengths to the bladder.

*Sphincter muscles* - hold urine in the bladder.

*Bladder* - functions as a temporary reservoir for the urine.

*Urethra* - the tube that carries the urine from the bladder to the outside. It is lined with mucous membranes and has a muscular layer that contracts helping to propel the urine.



### **Common Acute and Chronic Problems for Urinary System:**

Cystitis, Bladder & Urinary tract infections	Hematuria
Incontinence, Enuresis	Dysuria
Edema	Albuminuria
Kidney stones	Renal failure
Retention	Urethritis
Benign prostatic hyperplasia	Gout

### **Herbal Applications for the Urinary System:**

Extracts	Food
Infusions	Teas

**Herbs for the Urinary System:*****Analgesic Herbs***

Goldenrod (*Solidago spp.*)  
Valerian (*Valerian officinalis*)

***Anodyne Herbs***

Bearberry (*Arcostaphylos uva-ursi*)

***Anti-inflammatory Herbs***

Bearberry (*Arcostaphylos uva-ursi*)  
Bergamot (*Monarda spp.*)  
Celery Seed (*Apium graveolens*)  
Cleavers (*Galium aparine*)  
Corn Silk (*Zea mays*)  
Cranberry (*Vaccinium spp.*)  
Goldenrod (*Solidago spp.*)  
Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)  
Jamaican Dogwood (*Piscidia piscipula*)  
Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*)  
Plantain (*Plantago spp.*)  
Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

***Antilithic Herbs***

Chamomile (*Chamomila matricaria*, )  
Couchgrass (*Elymus repens*)  
Gravel Root (*Eupatorium purpureum*)  
Hydrangea root (*Hydrangea arborescens*)

***Antimicrobial Herbs***

Bearberry (*Arcostaphylos uva-ursi*)  
Bergamot (*Monarda spp.*)  
Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*)  
Couchgrass (*Elymus repens*)  
Echinacea (*Echinacea spp.*)  
Oregon Grape Root (*Mahonia spp.*)  
Usnea (*Usnea spp.*)  
Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

***Antiseptic Herbs***

Bergamot (*Monarda spp.*)  
Blueberry (*Vaccinium spp.*)  
Cranberry (*Vaccinium spp.*)  
Juniper (*Juniperus spp.*)

***Antispasmodic Herbs***

Bergamot (*Monarda spp.*)  
Jamaican Dogwood (*Piscidia piscipula*)  
Lobelia (*Lobelia inflata*) LD  
St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)  
Valerian (*Valerian officinalis*)

***Astringent Herbs***

Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*)  
Blueberry (*Vaccinium spp.*)  
Cranberry (*Vaccinium spp.*)  
Goldenrod (*Solidago spp.*)  
Juniper (*Juniperus spp.*)  
Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

***Demulcent Herbs***

Corn Silk (*Zea mays*)  
Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*)  
Marshmallow Root (*Althea officinalis*)  
Slippery Elm (*Ulmus rubra*)

***Diuretic Herbs***

Bearberry (*Arcostaphylos uva-ursi*)  
Cleavers (*Galium aparine*)  
Corn Silk (*Zea mays*)  
Couchgrass (*Elymus repens*)  
Blueberry (*Vaccinium spp.*)  
Cranberry (*Vaccinium spp.*)  
Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinalis*)  
Goldenrod (*Solidago spp.*)  
Gravel Root (*Eupatorium purpureum*)  
Jamaican Dogwood (*Piscidia piscipula*)  
Juniper (*Juniperus spp.*)  
Nettles (*Urtica dioica*)  
Parsley Root (*Petroselinum crispum radicosum*)  
Plantain (*Plantago spp.*)

***Nervine Herbs***

Bergamot (*Monarda spp.*)  
Oatstraw (*Avena sativa*)  
St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum, H. spp.*)  
Valerian (*Valerian officinalis*)

**Ways to Maintain Urinary System Health:**

- ~ Drink plenty of water, especially when you are thirsty. The best test to make sure you are getting enough water is by the color of your urine. It should be light in color with little smell.
- ~ Be mindful of your caffeine intake as they are harsh diuretics.
- ~ Keep your salt intake moderate. Switch to sea salt instead of iodized table salt.
- ~ Bring a bottle of water with you when you are away from home, especially if you will be exercising or in the sun.
- ~ Avoid ingestion of essential oils as they can damage the tissues of nephrons.
- ~ Squat to urinate, especially if you find you are having problems completely emptying your bladder (men and women)

**Recommended Herbal Books (\*indicates available through library loan system):**

- ~ The Gift of Healing Herbs : Plant Medicines and Home Remedies for a Vibrantly Healthy Life by Robin Rose Bennett\*
- ~ The Herbal Handbook: A User's Guide to Medical Herbalism by David Hoffmann
- ~ Herbal Medicine From the Heart of the Earth by Sharon Tilgner, N.D.
- ~ The Authentic Herbal Healer by Holly Bellebuono
- ~ Down There: Sexual and Reproductive Health by Susun Weed

**Online Resources**

Learning about the Urinary system:

<http://www.innvista.com/health/anatomy/urinary-system/>

Medicinal Plants of the Southwest on UTI's: <http://medplant.nmsu.edu/Diseases/uti/uti.HTML>

Rosalee de la Foret: <http://www.herbalremediesadvice.org/anatomy-urinary-system.html>  
<http://www.herbalremediesadvice.org/urinary-system.html>

Susun Weed on bladder infections: [http://www.menopause-metamorphosis.com/An\\_Excerpt-120\\_Bladder\\_Infections.htm](http://www.menopause-metamorphosis.com/An_Excerpt-120_Bladder_Infections.htm)

David Hoffmann on Dysuria: <http://www.healthy.net/Health/Article/Dysuria/1355>

David Hoffmann on Gout: <http://www.healthy.net/Health/Article/Gout/1653>

David Hoffmann on Kidney Stones: [http://www.healthy.net/Health/Article/Kidney\\_Stones/1353/1](http://www.healthy.net/Health/Article/Kidney_Stones/1353/1)

Sharol Tilgner on Urinary Tract Health: <http://www.herbaltransitions.com/Newsletters%20and%20other%20goodies/Urinary%20tract%20ezine.pdf>

The benefits of squatting to urinate: <https://bhls.wordpress.com/2011/03/14/it-is-wise-and-healthy-always-pass-urine-peacefully-in-squatting-posture/>

The squatty potty: <http://squattypotty.com/5-problems-with-sitting-on-your-toilet/>

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