

Let's Talk About Kidney Stones

7th ICONECT Online Academy 2026–2027

International Collaborative Network on Kidney Stones

From stone removal to precision prevention through knowledge, collaboration and innovation

From Kidney Stones to Precision Prevention

Kidney stone disease is no longer considered merely an episodic urological condition. It is a complex, recurrent and heterogeneous disorder shaped by metabolic, nutritional, genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors, with important links to chronic kidney disease and the broader cardio-kidney-metabolic continuum.

The seventh edition of the ICONECT Online Academy will examine how emerging scientific knowledge can be translated into individualized prevention, longitudinal monitoring and more precise patient-centred care.

Beyond the Stone

The clinical challenge extends beyond stone removal. This programme asks:

- Why is this patient forming stones?
- Which metabolic, genetic and environmental factors are driving the disease?
- Which lithogenic phenotype is involved?
- How can recurrence and kidney or systemic complications be prevented?
- How can long-term kidney and metabolic health be improved?

Answering these questions requires a shift from episodic intervention to coordinated, risk-adapted prevention across the urology–nephrology interface.

Scientific Focus of the 2026–2027 Programme

The programme will provide an updated multidisciplinary perspective on:

- metabolic and urinary evaluation and identification of lithogenic phenotypes;
- personalized nutrition, lifestyle interventions and medical prevention;
- genetic and rare metabolic stone disorders;
- kidney stone disease within the chronic kidney disease and cardio-kidney-metabolic continuum;
- renal and systemic complications of nephrolithiasis;
- emerging therapies, digital monitoring and precision prevention.

Through expert lectures, real-world clinical cases and interactive discussions, internationally recognized specialists will critically appraise current evidence and explore its implementation in daily clinical practice.

Our Mission

Share knowledge to improve clinical practice and advance kidney stone care from episodic intervention to personalized, longitudinal and preventive medicine.

Programme 2026–2027

All sessions are held online on Thursdays from 18:00 to 19:00 Brussels time.

8 October 2026

The Future of Kidney Stone Monitoring: Digital Technologies and Precision Prevention

Agnieszka Pozdzik, MD, PhD

Nephrologist, Department of Internal Medicine, Nephrology and Endocrinology; Nephrolithiasis Clinic, CHU HELORA; Faculty of Medicine, University of Mons (UMONS), Mons, Belgium

This opening session will examine how connected monitoring, longitudinal data and clinically supervised digital tools can shift recurrence prevention from periodic assessment to individualized, proactive care.

Format: Expert lecture and discussion

19 November 2026

Parathyroid Disorders and Kidney Stones: A Case-Based Approach to Diagnosis and Management

Naim Maalouf, MD

Professor of Internal Medicine and Associate Director, Charles and Jane Pak Center for Mineral Metabolism and Clinical Research, Division of Endocrinology, UT Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, Texas, USA

Using clinical cases, this session will clarify how parathyroid dysfunction alters mineral metabolism and stone risk, translating diagnostic reasoning into targeted treatment and recurrence prevention.

Format: Combined expert lecture and case-based discussion

10 December 2026

Luminal Tubular Mineral Plugs in Idiopathic Stone Formers: How Do They Differ from Randall's Plaque?

James C. Williams Jr., PhD

Professor, Department of Anatomy, Cell Biology and Physiology, Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

This session will contrast intratubular mineral plugs with interstitial Randall's plaque, linking distinct pathways of crystal retention to the microstructure and pathogenesis of idiopathic stone disease.

Format: Expert lecture and discussion

21 January 2027

Genetics of Monogenic Stone Disease: From Molecular Diagnosis to Precision Management

Professor John A. Sayer, MD, PhD

Clinical Professor of Renal Medicine and Deputy Dean of Clinical Medicine, Biosciences Institute, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Newcastle University; Consultant Nephrologist, Freeman Hospital, Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom

This session will show how phenotype-driven genetic testing can identify monogenic stone disorders, refine counselling and surveillance, and enable mechanism-based clinical management.

Format: Combined expert lecture and case-based discussion

18 February 2027

Nephrolithiasis in Young Women: Could Estrogen Influence Stone Risk?

David Tovbin, MD, PhD, with Naim Maalouf, MD, as expert discussant

Forum for Treatment and Prevention of Nephrolithiasis, Israeli Society of Nephrology and Hypertension, Giv'atayim, Israel; Charles and Jane Pak Center for Mineral Metabolism and Clinical Research, UT Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, Texas, USA

This session will critically examine sex-specific patterns of nephrolithiasis and the potential influence of estrogen on urinary risk factors, mineral metabolism and prevention in younger women.

Format: Expert lecture and moderated discussion

4 March 2027

Registries and Specialist Networks in Rare Stone Disease: What Can They Offer?

Shabbir Moochhala, PhD, FRCPE

Consultant Nephrologist, Royal Free Hospital; Honorary Associate Professor, UCL Department of Renal Medicine, University College London, London, United Kingdom

This session will examine how disease registries and international specialist networks can accelerate diagnosis, harmonize phenotyping, generate real-world evidence and expand access to expert care for patients with rare stone disorders.

Format: Expert lecture and discussion

15 April 2027

Long-Term Follow-Up After Urological Stone Treatment: From Stone-Free Status to Recurrence Prevention

Giovanni Gambaro, MD, PhD

Professor of Nephrology and Senior Scientist, Nephrology Section, Department of Medicine, University of Verona, Verona, Italy

This session will reposition post-procedural follow-up as a preventive care pathway integrating residual stone burden, metabolic recurrence risk and structured uro-nephrological surveillance.

Format: Expert lecture and discussion

27 May 2027

AI in Healthcare Across the Atlantic: Navigating Regulatory Differences Between the EU and the USA

Matteo Capriulo, Attorney-at-Law, PhD

Director, Association des Médecins anciens étudiants de l'Université libre de Bruxelles (AMUB), Brussels, Belgium

This session will compare the evolving EU and US regulatory frameworks governing clinical AI, highlighting their implications for medical device qualification, health-data governance, accountability, cross-border collaboration and the safe implementation of AI in healthcare.

Format: Expert lecture and multidisciplinary discussion

17 June 2027

Heat Exposure and Kidney Stone Disease: Translating New Evidence into Climate-Ready Prevention

Charles D. Scales Jr., MD, MSHS, FACS

Associate Professor of Urology and Population Health Sciences, Vice Chair of Research, Department of Urology, and Associate Dean for Clinical Research Initiatives, Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, North Carolina, USA

Drawing on novel analyses, this session will examine how heat exposure and dehydration shape stone risk and how environmental evidence can inform practical, climate-resilient prevention.

Format: Expert lecture and discussion

An International Collaborative Educational Initiative

Let's Talk About Kidney Stones is organized within the International Collaborative Network on Kidney Stones (ICONEKT), an international educational and scientific platform bringing together clinicians, researchers and healthcare professionals committed to advancing knowledge, fostering collaboration and improving the prevention and management of kidney stone disease worldwide.

Scientific and Organising Committee

Agnieszka Pozdzik, MD, PhD

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Programme Information

Programme webpage: <https://www.helora.be/lets-talk-about-kidney-stones>