

Kidney Tea

Kidney Tea is a combination of three herbs:

1. **Gold Coin Grass.** Also known as *Lysimachiae Herba*, *Herba Desmodii Styrachifolii*, or *Jin Qian Cao* in TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine). It is a perennial herb with spade-shaped green leaves. In Chinese medicine, it is traditionally used to prevent and expel gallbladder stones and kidney stones. It is also used topically, to treat skin sores, lesions, and snake bites.
2. **Corn Silk.** Also known as *Zea mays*, or *Yu Mi Xiu* in TCM. Corn silk is the thin brown thread-like material found at the end of a corn husk. Corn silk is used for urinary tract infections, kidney stones, and other problems with the urinary system. It is also used as a diuretic, an anti-oxidant, and for diabetes and hypertension.
3. **Eucommia Bark.** This is the bark of the *Eucommia Ulmoides* “hard rubber” tree, and the bark is known as *Du Zhong* in TCM. This tree is native to China and it is becoming rare because its habitat has been heavily encroached upon by human settlement, but its bark is harvested *without* killing the tree, by taking small amounts at a time. Eucommia bark is used to strengthen the kidneys in TCM, and it is part of the kidney tea formula because stronger kidneys will more strongly push out kidney stones. TCM practitioners also often recommend eucommia bark tea for people who are experiencing lower back pain, frequent urination, and high blood pressure. It has been shown to significantly reduce blood pressure in clinical studies[1].

Directions

Step 1: Take 10 to 15g of eucommia bark, 15 to 30 grams of GCG, and 15 to 30 grams of cornsilk. In case you do not have an accurate kitchen scale, it should look roughly like the picture at right (notice the plastic spoon and the quarter, which are included to show scale). The GCG is the green leaves on the left, the eucommia bark is the flat brown square in the middle, and the corn silk is the clump of thin thread-like fibres on the right.



Step 2: Add all three ingredients to a pot, then add 6 to 8 cups of water and boil for 5 minutes, then let simmer for 20 more minutes.

Step 3: Drink all of the tea during the day, preferably between meals so as not to take it on a full stomach.

Step 4: GCG and corn silk are diuretics, so they can deplete your fluids and potassium. Therefore, you may wish to drink extra water, and take potassium supplements or eat potassium-rich foods.

Special Instructions/Interactions

- If you are taking blood thinners such as Warfarin, you may need to avoid taking corn silk, since corn silk may counteract the effect of the Warfarin.
- If you are on any blood pressure medications, you may wish to consult with your health care provider before taking eucommia bark, since eucommia bark has an anti-hypertensive effect.
- Gold Coin Grass and corn silk both have a mild diuretic effect, so the tea can lead to increased urination and should not be taken in conjunction with diuretic drugs.

References

1. *Xin Yi Yao Xue Za Zhi* (New Journal of Medicine and Herbology), 1978; 10:30