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CHARACTERISTICS OF URINE

Characteristics that can be applied to urine include color, turbidity (transparency), smell (odor), pH (acidity- alkalinity) and density.

COLOR: Typically yellow- amber, but varies according to recent diet and the concentration of the urine. Drinking more water tends to reduce the concentration of the urine, and therefore causes it to have a lighter color.

Dark urine indicates dehydration.

Red urine indicated red blood cells within the urine, a sign of kidney damage and diseases.

SMELL: The smell of urine may provide health information. For example, urine of diabetics may have a sweet or fruity odor due to the presence of ketones.

pH: The pH of normal urine is generally in the range 4.6- 8, with the typical average being around 6.0. Much of the variation occurs due to diet. For example, high protein diets results in more acidic urine, but vegetarian diets generally result in more alkaline urine (both within the typical range of 4.6 -8).

DENSITY: This is the ratio of the weight of volume of a substance compared with the weight of the same volume of distilled water. The density of normal urine ranges from 0.001 to 0.035.

TURBIDITY: The turbidity of the urine sample is gauged subjectively and reported as clear, slightly cloudy, cloudy, opaque or flocculent. Excess turbidity results from the presence of suspended particles in the urine, the cause of which can usually be determined by the results of the microscopic urine sediment examination. Common causes of abnormal turbidity include: increased cells, urinary tract infections or obstructions.

COMPONENTS OF URINE

Urine is aqueous solution of greater than 95% water. Other constituents include urea, chloride, sodium, potassium, creatinine and other dissolved ions, and inorganic and organic compounds. Urea is a non-toxic molecule made of toxic ammonia and carbondioxide.

URINE

0.05% Ammonia

0.18% Sulphate

0.12% Phosphate

0.6% Chloride

0.01% Magnesium

0.015% Calcium

0.6% Potassium

0.1% Sodium

0.1% Creatinine

0.03% Uric acid

2% Urea.