

## **THE URINARY TRACT**

(Collated by Michelle Wilkinson [www.movingnaturally.co.uk](http://www.movingnaturally.co.uk) )

**The kidneys are two bean-sized organs 10-12cm long, 5cm wide, 2.5cm thick and 150-200grams in weight.**

**The kidneys regulate the body's water volume by conserving water and releasing urine (watery waste).**

**The kidneys filter (cleanse) 180 litres of blood daily to remove waste and excess fluid.**

**The body's entire volume of blood flows through the kidneys approximately 15 times each hour.**

**The kidneys have other roles. The hormone erythropoietin stimulates red blood cell production in the red bone marrow. In relationship with the sunlight on the skin, the kidneys activate vitamin D which in turn allows calcium absorption into the bloodstream from the small intestine. They also contain the enzyme renin which regulates blood pressure.**

**In the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) the kidneys are regarded as the storehouse of "Vital Essence" or life-force. In a strong state they are associated with vitality, courage, commitment while in a weakened state they cause lifelessness, exhaustion and stress.**

**The Kidney meridian runs from the sole of the foot with the KD1 acupressure point 'Bubbling Spring'. It travels up the inner lower legs, across the back of the knees, up lateral side of the Bladder meridian in the upper legs. It continues either side of the midline into the neck and reaches out under the collar bones.**

**Growing out of the kidneys are the ureters, muscular tubes that contract in waves to push the urine down into the bladder 25cm below.**

**The bladder is a muscular bag which can grow from the size of a plumb to a grapefruit. It can hold around half a litre of urine.**

**In (TCM) the bladder offers buoyant support, containment and directionality. The meridian starts at the inside corners of the eyes, runs up and over the head travelling down each side of the spine and continues down the midline of the back of the legs to finish on the lateral side of the little toenail.**