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Level 5 – 27th October 2025

Snake 'pee crystals' could help treat kidney stones

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<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2510/251027-snake-pee-crystals-5.html>

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Please try Levels 4 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2510/251027-snake-pee-crystals-5.html>

The natural world contains a huge number of untapped remedies. The latest discovery is from researchers in the USA. They believe their research into how reptiles excrete waste could help treat human illnesses. The scientists analysed tiny "pee crystals" that reptiles use in place of urine to get rid of waste. The crystals are a solid form of uric acid. This is a by-product created when the body breaks down nitrogen in food. It can be harmful. Too much nitrogen can lead to health problems like gout and kidney stones. Our bodies flush uric acid waste away when we pass water.

The study is published in the Journal of the American Chemical Society. A team of chemists and herpetologists (scientists who study reptiles and amphibians) examined waste elimination processes of over 20 reptile species. The team focused its attention on the excess nitrogen that crystallised. A researcher said the team's findings could help us understand and treat uric acid-related problems like kidney stones. She said the research was to understand how reptiles deal with nitrogen, which might lead to new approaches to disease prevention and treatment.

Sources: <https://gizmodo.com/scientists-have-cracked-the-mystery-of-snake-pee-2000675053>
<https://www.popsci.com/science/reptile-pee-kidney-stones/>
<https://www.iflscience.com/reptiles-pee-crystals-but-what-are-they-made-of-scientists-wanted-to-find-out-81278>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2510/251027-snake-pee-crystals-5.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. a huge number of untapped | a. to health problems |
| 2. research into how reptiles | b. nitrogen in food |
| 3. The crystals are a solid | c. water |
| 4. This is a by- | d. away |
| 5. when the body breaks down | e. excrete waste |
| 6. Too much nitrogen can lead | f. remedies |
| 7. Our bodies flush uric acid waste | g. form of uric acid |
| 8. when we pass | h. product |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. A team of chemists | a. on the excess nitrogen |
| 2. scientists who study reptiles | b. approaches |
| 3. waste | c. and amphibians |
| 4. The team focused its attention | d. stones |
| 5. treat uric acid- | e. with nitrogen |
| 6. kidney | f. and herpetologists |
| 7. understand how reptiles deal | g. related problems |
| 8. lead to new | h. elimination processes |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2510/251027-snake-pee-crystals-5.html>

The natural world contains a huge (1) _____ remedies. The latest discovery is from researchers in the USA. They believe their research into how (2) _____ could help treat human illnesses. The scientists analysed tiny "pee crystals" that reptiles use in (3) _____ to get rid of waste. The crystals are a (4) _____ uric acid. This is a by-product created when the body breaks down (5) _____. It can be harmful. Too much nitrogen can lead to health problems like gout and kidney stones. Our bodies flush uric acid waste away when (6) _____.

The study (7) _____ the Journal of the American Chemical Society. A team of chemists and herpetologists (scientists who study (8) _____) examined waste elimination processes of over 20 reptile species. The team (9) _____ on the excess nitrogen that crystallised. A researcher said (10) _____ could help us understand and treat uric acid-related problems like kidney stones. She said the research was to understand how reptiles (11) _____, which might lead to new approaches to disease (12) _____.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2510/251027-snake-pee-crystals-5.html>

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SNAKES SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2510/251027-snake-pee-crystals-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about snakes in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.
When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____
- f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____
- f) _____

WRITING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2510/251027-snake-pee-crystals-5.html>

Write about **snakes** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.

[illegible]