

# Potassium

## Tips for People with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)

### What Is Potassium?

Potassium is a mineral that helps your nerves and muscles work the right way.

### Why Is Potassium Important for People with CKD?

In some people with CKD, the kidneys may not remove extra potassium from the blood. Some medicines also can raise your potassium level. Your food choices can help you lower your potassium level.

### How Do I Know My Potassium Is High?

People often do not feel any different when their potassium is high. Your health care provider will check the level of potassium in your blood and the medicines you take. The level of potassium in your blood should be between 3.5 to 5.0.\*

### How Do I Lower Potassium in My Diet?

- Eat smaller portions of foods high in protein at meals and for snacks: meat, poultry, fish, beans, dairy, and nuts.
- Use spices and herbs in cooking and at the table. Salt substitutes often contain potassium and should not be used.
- **Potassium chloride** can be used in place of salt in some packaged foods, like canned soups and tomato products. Limit foods with potassium chloride on the ingredient list.
- Drain canned fruits and vegetables before eating.
- If you have diabetes, choose apple, grape, or cranberry juice when your blood sugar goes down.

Eat These Foods	Instead of These Foods
● White rice	● Brown and wild rice
● White bread and pasta	● Whole wheat bread and pasta
● Cooked rice and wheat cereals	● Bran cereals
● Rice milk (not enriched)	● Cow's milk

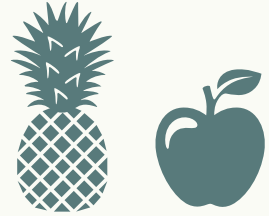
\*Normal ranges may vary.

## How Do I Lower Potassium in My Diet? (continued)

- Choose fruits and vegetables that are lower in potassium. Have very small portions of foods that are higher in potassium, like one slice of tomato on a sandwich, a few slices of banana on cereal, or half of an orange.

### Fruits and Vegetables *Lower* in Potassium (200 mg or less\*)

**FRUITS:** Apples/apple juice/applesauce • Apricots (canned)/apricot nectar  
 • Berries • Cranberry juice • Fruit cocktail • Grapes/grape juice  
 • Grapefruit/grapefruit juice • Honeydew melon • Lemons and limes  
 • Mangoes • Papayas • Pears • Peaches • Plums • Pineapple  
 • Rhubarb • Tangerines • Watermelon



**VEGETABLES:** Alfalfa sprouts • Bell peppers • Bamboo shoots (canned)  
 • Broccoli (fresh) • Cabbage • Carrots • Cauliflower • Celery and onions (raw)  
 • Corn • Cucumber • Eggplant • Green beans • Kale • Lettuce  
 • Mushrooms (fresh) • Okra • Summer squash (cooked)



### Fruits and Vegetables *Higher* in Potassium (More than 200 mg\*)

**FRUITS:** Apricots (fresh) • Bananas • Cantaloupe • Dates • Nectarines • Kiwi • Prunes/prune juice  
 • Oranges/orange juice • Raisins

**VEGETABLES:** Acorn and butternut squash • Avocado • Baked beans • Beet and other greens  
 • Broccoli (cooked) • Brussels sprouts (cooked) • Chard • Chile peppers • Mushrooms (cooked)  
 • Potatoes • Pumpkin • Spinach (cooked) • Split peas, lentils, beans • Sweet potatoes, yams  
 • Vegetable juice • Tomatoes/tomato juice/tomato sauce

\*Potassium level is based on one serving. **One serving of fruit** is one small piece; ½ cup fresh, canned, or cooked fruit; ¼ cup dried fruit; or ½ cup juice. **One serving of vegetables** is ½ cup fresh or cooked vegetables, 1 cup raw leafy vegetables, or ½ cup juice.

For more information, visit [www.nkdep.nih.gov](http://www.nkdep.nih.gov) or call 1-866-4 KIDNEY (1-866-454-3639).

The National Kidney Disease Education Program (NKDEP) encourages people to get tested for kidney disease and educates those with kidney disease and their providers about treatments that can help delay or prevent kidney failure. NKDEP is a program of the National Institutes of Health.

