

Low Potassium Diet

Patients must contact their dietitians for any questions regarding the incorporation of information obtained from this guideline into their diets.

Potassium is a substance found in food that affects your heartbeat. The unhealthy kidney cannot excrete an excess of potassium in the urine so that it stays behind in the body. Your blood levels of potassium will then rise and it can be dangerous to your heart, even cause death. Potassium is found in many foods, especially fruit, vegetables, milk and certain starches. These foods need to be restricted in the diet to ensure that the potassium in the blood does not increase to dangerous levels.

How to reduce potassium content of vegetables

- Peel vegetables and cut in smaller pieces.
- Soak vegetables for about 2 hours in warm water and then drain the vegetables.
- Afterwards boil the vegetables in water until cooked and drain before serving.

Tips on fruit and vegetable intake: (see tables on the following page)

1. Choose more fruit and vegetables from the low and moderate potassium lists and less from the high potassium lists.
2. Most starches are low in potassium except for potato and sweet potato that should be limited to only 1 portion per day or as prescribed by your dietitian.

Other food items high in potassium that has to be restricted as prescribed by your dietitian:

- Raw vegetables
- Dried fruit, fruit salad, fruit juice
- Potato chips (deep fried and crisps), baked potato and sweet potato
- Tomato puree, - juice, and -sauce
- Legumes e.g. dried beans, peas, lentils, soya products
- Nuts and peanuts
- Brown sugar (not more than 2 tsp) and golden syrup (thinly spread)
- Milk and dairy products e.g. fruit yoghurt, chocolates (do not use more than the daily allowance).
- Salt replacements or salt substitutes containing potassium
- Wine, sherry, coffee

Dietitian:
Date: / /
Tel:
E-mail:
Fax:



Fruit

Low Potassium (allowed)		Moderate Potassium (allowed)		High Potassium (allowed)	
Apple	1 small	Apricot	2 small	Avocado	quarter
Cherry	2 heaped dessertspoons	Gooseberry	10 berries	Banana	1 large
Granadilla	1 medium	Grapefruit	Half	Fig	2 large
Kumquats	6 medium	Guava	1 small	Grapes	1 small bunch
Lemon	½ medium	Mango	quarter	Kiwi fruit	1 fruit
Litchi	6 portions	Melon, green-white	3 cm wedge	Melon, yellow	3 cm wedge
Pear	1 small	Naartjie	1 medium to large	Orange	1 small
Pineapple	2 medium slices	Pawpaw	4 heaped tablespoons	Peach	1 small
Plum	1 medium			Watermelon	1 small wedge
Strawberries	4 medium				

Vegetables

Low Potassium (allowed)		Moderate Potassium (allowed)		High Potassium (allowed)	
Broccoli, cooked	½ cup	Asparagus, cooked	½ cup	Mixed vegetables, canned	½ cup
Cabbage, cooked	½ cup	Beetroot, cooked	½ medium	Mushroom, cooked whole	½ cup
Celery, raw	1 stick	Brinjal, cooked with skin	½ cup	Pumpkin, gem	½ large
Coleslaw	½ cup	Brussels sprouts, cooked	½ cup	Pumpkin, butternut	½ cup
Cucumber	5 medium slices	Carrots, raw or cooked	½ cup	Tomato and onion stew	1 heaped large spoon
Lettuce	½ cup	Carrot salad	½ cup		
Mixed vegetables	½ cup	Cauliflower, cooked	½ cup		
Onion, raw	2 slices	French salad	½ cup		
Peas, cooked	2 heaped tablespoons	Green beans, cooked	½ cup		
Pepper	4 medium slices	Pumpkin, patty pans	3 heaped tablespoons		



Pumpkin, marrow	½ cup	Pumpkin, hubbard	½ cup		
Radish, raw	2 large	Spinach, cooked	½ cup		
Sweet corn, canned	½ cup	Tomato, raw	1 small		

Starches

Low Potassium (allowed)		High Potassium (allowed)	
Bread / rolls	1 slice / 1 roll	Potato, cooked or baked	1 medium
Maize meal, soft	2 heaped large spoons	Potato, chips	½ cup
Maize meal, stiff / cooked oats	1 heaped large spoon	Samosa, vegetable filling	2 small
Maltabella, cooked	5 heaped table spoons	Sweet potato, no skin	2 heaped tablespoons
Corn flakes / Rice crispies	1 cup		
Pasta	1 heaped table spoon		
Rice	2 heaped table spoons		
Popcorn, sugar coated / unsalted	2 cups		
Whole wheat crackers	3 biscuits		

