

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

Renal Disease: Healthy eating with kidney problems

This information should only be used by patients with renal disease and should only be followed with supervision from a dietitian.

It is beneficial to eat a healthy diet to reduce the risk of heart disease, to maintain healthy bowel habits and to prevent unintentional weight gain.

Try to:

- Limit fats and fatty foods
- Limit intake of salt
- Aim for five portions of suitable fruit and vegetables each day
- Limit sugar and sugary foods
- Include suitable oily fish in your diet
- Include high fibre foods

Fat - limit fats and fatty foods

- Grill, roast, stew, casserole or braise food rather than frying. If you do fry use an oil such as rapeseed, olive, corn or sunflower oil sparingly (up to 1 teaspoon per person at meals). If you are overweight try using oil spray.
- Use butter and margarine sparingly. Try monounsaturated oil such as olive, rapeseed or groundnut in cooking. Try a monounsaturated spread such as Bertolli, Olivio, or supermarkets own brand. (or low fat varieties are available if you are overweight; try to choose the 'light' versions)
- Try semi skimmed (2% fat) milk, 1% fat milk or skimmed (0.1% fat) milk
- Choose low fat cheeses such as cottage cheese, Edam, reduced fat cheddar or a light soft cheese such as Philadelphia light. Grate hard cheeses to make them go further or use a smaller portion, particularly if you are on a low phosphate diet.
- Choose lean cuts of meat and remove any visible fat
- Avoid hidden sources of fat in; pastry, mayonnaise, salad cream, cakes and biscuits
- Limit crisps, savoury snacks and nuts



Patient Information

Salt - Limit intake of salt

- Avoid adding salt during cooking or at the table (if needed try gradually reducing to allow your taste buds to adjust)
- Limit salty processed foods such as nuts, crisps, tinned or packet soups, gravy and stock cubes, sauces, ready made meals, sausages, pork pies and foods tinned in brine
- Experiment with herbs, spices, garlic and pepper in cooking
- **Avoid using salt substitutes** such as Lo Salt and Pan Salt if you are on a **potassium restriction**
- Reduce smoked foods such as smoked bacon, ham, cheeses, and fish

Further information on reducing salt intake can be obtained from your renal dietitian

Sugar - reduce sugar and sugary foods

- Avoid using sugar, honey or jaggery in drinks, on cereal or in milk puddings. If needed try a sweetener instead such as Canderel, Sweetex, Splenda or Truvia
- Try to use low calorie squash and fizzy drinks (diet and no added sugar varieties)
- Limit your intake of sweets, Indian sweets, chocolate and mints. Try not to buy sweets, chocolate, cakes or biscuits, if you are buying these for your household then try to limit the amount and choose plain varieties
- If having tinned fruit choose the varieties in natural juice or light syrup and drain before eating
- Limit sugars in jam, marmalade and honey. Try reduced sugar varieties wherever possible and spread these thinly

Fish- Aim to have two portions each week One oily and one white fish

- Oily fish is the best source of Omega 3 fats which have been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke
- Types of oily fish include: Salmon, Pilchards, Sardines, Herring, Fresh/frozen Tuna, Mackerel, Kippers and Trout

How much omega 3 do I need to eat?

- Aim to have at least one portions of oily fish per week to keep your heart healthy
- A serving is 120g (4oz) of fresh or frozen fish, one small tin or half a medium tin of fish
- If you have been advised to follow a phosphate restriction then avoid fish with edible bones and avoid eating fish skin as these are both high in phosphate
- Avoid taking fish liver oils, such as cod liver oil, as these contain high levels of vitamin A which can be dangerous if you have kidney problems

Patient Information

Fibre - Include high fibre foods

Good sources of fibre include:

- Wholegrain breakfast cereals for example; Weetabix, shredded wheat, bran flakes and porridge
- Wholemeal or granary breads including rolls, pitta, bagels, naan and chapattis
- Wholemeal pasta
- Wholemeal flour
- Brown rice
- Fruit, vegetables and salad (check for suitable options on your low potassium diet sheet if appropriate)

Introduce fibre gradually to your diet to allow your body to adjust to the increase

Warning - Star fruit contains a chemical which can be extremely dangerous to people with kidney problems. These should be avoided.

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Contact number: 024 7696 6151

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Department	Dietetic Department
Contact Tel	Ext 26151
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