

Patient Information

Nutrition and Dietetics

Renal Disease - Low potassium snacks and drinks

This information is only for patients with a high potassium level. Only follow this advice under supervision from a dietitian.

Use this information to help you choose snacks and drinks whilst following a low potassium diet.

Avoid potassium containing food additives

Many processed foods contain potassium additives. Manufacturers add these to food to improve the texture, lifespan or reduce the salt content of foods.

These additives are absorbed very efficiently by your body. They can raise your potassium levels more so than naturally occurring potassium in other foods. Avoiding additives can therefore help control your potassium levels.



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What to look for

The main potassium additives to look for on the labels of processed snacks and drinks are '**potassium chloride,**' '**potassium lactate,**' '**potassium phosphate**' or '**potassium citrate**'

Processed snacks and drinks can include:

- low salt products
- some meat
- vegetarian meat alternatives
- processed cheese
- crisps
- powdered drink mixes such as hot chocolate and malted drinks

Other potassium additives can be present in foods, but these tend to be added to food and drinks in much smaller amounts. So, they do not significantly contribute towards your potassium intake.

Get your 5 a day of fruit and vegetables from 'lower potassium' options. This can help to manage your overall acid balance and potassium levels and helps to support your overall health. Aim to have 2 fruits and 3 vegetables per day.

Food items

Drinks

High potassium drinks to avoid

Avoid:

- × coffee
- × fruit juice
- × high fruit squash
- × drinking chocolate
- × Horlicks
- × instant white teas
- × milkshakes
- × smoothies

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Low potassium drinks to try

Try:

- ✓ milk - restrict to ½ pint per day **or 1 pint of a** dairy-free such as soya or oat milk
- ✓ tea
- ✓ fruit tea
- ✓ tap or mineral water
- ✓ Barley Cup or Caro (cereal-based coffee alternatives)
- ✓ squashes
- ✓ diet or sugar-free squashes
- ✓ fizzy drinks
- ✓ diet or sugar-free fizzy drinks
- ✓ flavoured water
- ✓ tonic water
- ✓ slimline tonic water - check packaging for potassium additives

Fruit

High potassium fruit to avoid

Avoid:

- × apricots
- × bananas
- × oranges
- × blackcurrants
- × redcurrants
- × rhubarb
- × avocados
- × figs
- × dates
- × mango
- × dried fruit
- × coconut
- × melon
- × pomegranate

Low potassium fruit to try

Try:

- ✓ apple (1small)
- ✓ pear (1 small)
- ✓ tangerine (1 small)
- ✓ satsumas (2 small)
- ✓ plums (1 small)
- ✓ grapes (15)
- ✓ strawberries (6)
- ✓ kiwi (1 small)
- ✓ blackberries (20)
- ✓ raspberries (20)
- ✓ blueberries (20)
- ✓ peach or nectarine (1 small)
- ✓ tinned fruit (1/3 tin - discard juice or syrup)

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Savoury snacks

High potassium snacks to avoid

Avoid:

- × potato crisps
- × nuts
- × Bombay mix
- × seeds & twiglets
- × vegetable crisps

Low potassium snacks to try

Try wheat, corn, or rice-based snacks such as:

- ✓ Wheat Crunchies
- ✓ Nik Naks
- ✓ Cheddars
- ✓ Pom Bears
- ✓ Mini Cheddars
- ✓ Space Raiders
- ✓ toffee popcorn
- ✓ low salt popcorn
- ✓ plain, no salt popcorn
- ✓ Snack a Jacks
- ✓ rice cakes
- ✓ breadsticks
- ✓ plain tortilla chips - check packaging for potassium additives

Make your own savoury snacks with Kidney Kitchen

For recipes go to Kidney Kitchen at www.kidneycareuk.org. Recipes include:

- cheddar and sage scones
- sweetcorn and feta muffins
- individual sausage rolls

Ask your renal dietitian for more recipes such as cheese scones and edamame dip.

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Sweets

High potassium sweets to avoid

Avoid:

- × chocolate
- × toffee
- × fudge
- × liquorice
- × coconut sweets
- × peanut brittle
- × sweets or chocolates containing nuts or dried fruit

Low potassium sweets to try

Try:

- ✓ boiled sweets
- ✓ mints
- ✓ fruit pastilles
- ✓ plain Turkish delight
- ✓ chewy sweets
- ✓ jelly sweets
- ✓ chewing gum
- ✓ marshmallows
- ✓ sweet popcorn
- ✓ honeycomb
- ✓ peppermints
- ✓ sherbet
- ✓ sugar-free mints, sweets or gum - in moderation as they can have a laxative effect

Cakes and biscuits

High potassium cakes and biscuits to avoid

Avoid any cakes or biscuits with dried fruit, nuts or chocolate.

Low potassium cakes and biscuits to try

Try:

- ✓ plain cakes and biscuits
- ✓ biscuits with jam or cream
- ✓ apple pies
- ✓ doughnuts
- ✓ flapjacks
- ✓ pastries
- ✓ scotch pancakes
- ✓ teacakes
- ✓ scones
- ✓ iced biscuits
- ✓ cream crackers
- ✓ crumpets
- ✓ plain croissants

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Make your own cakes and biscuits with Kidney Kitchen

For recipes go to Kidney Kitchen at www.kidneycareuk.org

Recipes include cornflake ginger cookies and gingerbread loaf.

Ask your renal dietitian for more recipes such as cherry flapjack, jam tarts, and shortbread.

Patients with diabetes

Some of the snacks and drinks listed above are high in sugar, particularly in the 'sweets,' 'cakes and biscuits' and 'drinks' sections. Choose wholegrain and lower sugar options where possible.

High blood glucose levels can increase the risk of high potassium levels, even when following a low potassium diet.

If you have any concerns about managing a low potassium diet whilst following dietary advice for diabetes, contact the renal dietitians for individualised advice and support.

Warning - Star fruit contains a chemical which can be extremely dangerous to people with kidney problems. Avoid star fruit.

Listeriosis

Avoid ready-to-eat smoked or cured fish products such as smoked salmon or gravlax due to an increased risk from listeriosis.

Listeriosis is an infection caused by bacteria called listeria. People with kidney disease are at higher risk of serious illness from listeriosis. More information on how to reduce the risk of Listeriosis can be found at:

Listeriosis - NHS: www.nhs.uk/conditions/listeriosis/

Listeria - Food Standards Agency: www.food.gov.uk/listeria

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Produced by Coventry Renal Dietitians, University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire. Contact us on 024 7696 6151. You can also follow us on X @UHCW_RenalDiet.

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