

Dietetics

Renal Disease: Low Potassium Diet - The Basics

This diet sheet is intended to be used for first line low potassium advice and will be given by a member of the renal multi-disciplinary team.

In addition to this information sheet your renal doctor or nurse will refer you to the renal dietitians for additional dietary advice tailored to your nutritional intake. You can contact the renal dietitians on: 024 7696 6151 if required

Potassium

- Potassium is a mineral found in many foods in your diet
- It can build up in your blood when your kidneys are unable to remove it efficiently
- A high potassium level can be dangerous because it affects muscle function in your heart.
- Reducing the potassium content of your diet can help to control your blood potassium levels

NB: If you have a poor appetite or are eating less than usual please ask your nurse to telephone the Renal Dietitians before following this advice.



Tips on following a low potassium diet:

- Fruit and vegetables are a very important part of your diet and can help regulate your potassium levels when eaten in the correct amounts, so please continue to include them **unless** they are in the list to be avoided. You can still aim for 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.
- Potatoes should be boiled for 20 minutes to remove some of the potassium from them into the water. Once boiled; potatoes can be roasted or chipped.
- Avoid potato products such as jacket potatoes and pre-processed potato products such as oven and chip shop chips as they will not have been boiled first.
- Boil vegetables instead of steaming them to remove potassium into the water. Make sure you throw away this water rather than using to make soups or gravy.
- Avoid potassium food additives – look for ‘potassium chloride’, ‘potassium lactate’, ‘potassium phosphate’ or ‘potassium citrate’ on the labels of foods such as meat, vegetarian meat alternatives, processed cheese, soups and powdered drink mixes eg: hot chocolate, malted drinks.

Food Item	Try to avoid the following
Fruit	Bananas, oranges, mango, rhubarb, avocado, blackcurrants, figs, dates and dried fruit
Vegetables	Parsnips, mushrooms, brussel sprouts, spinach, tinned tomatoes, sweet potato and baked beans
Snacks	Potato crisps, chocolate, toffee, fudge and nuts
Drinks	Coffee, chocolate and horlicks Fruit juices and smoothies
Milk	Limit to ½ pint per day of dairy milk or 1 pint per day of soya milk You can also swap 1 small carton of yoghurt for ¼ pint of milk from your allowance
Other	Salt substitutes, for example Lo-Salt and Pan Salt, potassium additives

Patient Information

Warning - Starfruit contains a chemical which can be extremely dangerous to people with kidney problems. **They should be avoided.**

Further Information

This information was produced by the Coventry Renal Dietitians, University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust. If you require any further information they can be contacted via telephone on: 024 7696 6151

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 6151 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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