

The Renal Diet - Phosphorus

Before making any changes to your diet make sure to discuss them with your physician or dietitian.

Phosphorus is a mineral which works with calcium to keep your bones healthy and strong. Phosphorus is needed by the body for building and maintaining bones and teeth and for normal nerve and muscle function. When kidney function declines the body has a difficult time keeping phosphorus and calcium in balance. As a result of this imbalance, the body cannot get rid of excess phosphorus (phosphorus levels increase) and the body cannot take in enough calcium (calcium levels decrease). To try and correct this imbalance the body will "steal" calcium from the bones which makes the bones weak. Problems associated with high phosphorus levels include itchy skin, bone and joint pain, and brittle bones.



The Renal Diet - Phosphorus

Foods that are high in phosphorus include:

- Cola drinks
- Peanut butter
- Broccoli
- Cheese
- Sardines
- Chicken/beef liver
- Nuts
- Caramels
- Beer
- Ice cream

Lower phosphorus food substitutes include:

- Non-dairy milk substitute
- Sherbet
- Non-cola soda
- Zucchini squash
- Hard candy

If your phosphorus level remains high your doctor may prescribe a phosphate binder for you to take. This medication will bind with the phosphorus in the food you eat and prevent phosphorus from being absorbed in the body.

It is important that you take this medication exactly as instructed by your doctor

References:

- "Diet and Exercise and How They Affect Your Kidneys", *Stay in Touch*, Baxter International Inc., August 2000, 5L0077.
- Lancaster, L., *Core Curriculum for Nephrology Nursing*, 4th edition, 2001, pg. 212.
- "Phosphorus and Renal Diet", *National Kidney Foundation*, 1993, 04-11NN.

Baxter

Creating a Better World of Care

www.kidneydirections.com

STAY IN TOUCH
A KIDNEY EDUCATION PROGRAM