

The Renal Diet - Potassium

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

Potassium helps to keep your nerves and muscles, especially your heart, working properly. Potassium is a mineral and can be found in many foods. The kidneys are responsible for helping to keep the correct amount of potassium in your body. Since potassium helps to keep your heart beating it can be very dangerous if your potassium level is too high. Too much potassium can make your heart beat irregularly or even stop without warning.

Foods that are **high** in potassium include the following:



Fruits	Vegetables	Other Foods
Bananas	Broccoli	Chocolate
Oranges	Potatoes	Coffee (limit to 2 cups per day)
Cantaloupe	Tomatoes	Salt substitute
Prunes	Mushrooms	Bran & Bran products
Raisins	Greens (swiss chard, collard, dandelion, mustard, and beet)	
Apricots		

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Low-potassium foods include the following:

Fruits	Vegetables	Other Foods
Apples	Beans (green or wax)	Rice
Grapes	Cucumber	Noodles
Pears	Onions	Cake
Watermelon	Lettuce	Cereal
Cranberries	Carrots	Bread & Bread products
Cherries		

It is important to remember that almost all foods contain potassium. Serving size will determine whether foods are a low, moderate, or high potassium level. ***Therefore, a large serving size of a low potassium food can become a high potassium food.***

References:

- "Tests that Help you Monitor the Health of your Kidneys". *Stay in Touch, Baxter International Inc., August 2000, 5L0077.*
- Lancaster, L., *Core Curriculum for Nephrology Nursing, 4th edition, 2001, pg. 212*
- "Potassium and Renal Diet", *National Kidney Foundation, 1993, 04-10NN.*

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