

# **REDUCING POTASSIUM IN YOUR DIET**

**Information for patients**

# Fruit and vegetables

Aim to have 4-5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

For the higher potassium foods, the dietitian will advise you what you can eat. This will depend on your current dietary intake.

## Fruit

<b>Higher potassium foods</b>	<b>Lower potassium alternatives (1 piece each, unless otherwise stated)</b>	
Apricot	Apple	
Avocado	Peach/nectarine	
Bananas	Pear	
Blackcurrants	Pineapple (1 slice)	
Mango	Clementine/mandarin/satsuma/tangerine	
Orange	Kiwi (small)	
Cantaloupe/honeydew melon	Plum (medium)	
Coconut	Blueberries (80g/handful)	
Figs	Cherries (80g/handful)	
Gooseberries	Grapes (80g/handful)	
Prunes	Strawberries (80g/handful)	
Rhubarb	Raspberries (80g/handful)	
Greengages	Watermelon	
Lychees	Grapefruit (½)*	
Star fruit	All tinned fruit (with juice or syrup drained off)	
All dried fruit, e.g. raisin, sultanas, prunes, dates	*To be avoided with certain medications. Ask your pharmacist if unsure.	
All fruit juices		

# Vegetables

All vegetables should be boiled, rather than steamed or microwaved. Boiling allows some of the potassium to leach into the water. This should be thrown away, **not** used for gravy or stock.

Vegetables can be blanched by boiling for approximately 1 minute, then draining before using in stir fries, casseroles, stews, curries and soups.

<b>Higher potassium foods</b>	<b>Lower potassium alternatives (Portion sizes as below)</b>
Asparagus	Beansprouts (4 tablespoons)
Artichoke	Broccoli (2 spears)
Aubergine	Cabbage (2 handfuls)
Baked beans	Carrots (3 tablespoons)
Beetroot	Cauliflower (6 florets)
Broad beans	Cress
Brussels sprouts	Cucumber (3cm)
Celery	French beans (3 tablespoons)
Okra (ladies fingers)	Lettuce (1 small bowl)
Parsnips	Marrow (3 tablespoons)
Spinach	Olives (20)
Dried vegetables	Peas, boiled (3 tablespoons)
Can be used in small amounts as part of a dish: Mushrooms	Peppers (capsicum) (½)
Onions/spring onions	Runner beans (3 tablespoons)
Sweetcorn	Sugar snap peas/mangetout (3 tablespoons)
Tomatoes (use to flavour)	Swede (3 tablespoons)
	Turnip (½)
	All tinned vegetables (with water drained off)

# Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates, also known as starchy foods, are a good source of energy, fibre and vitamins.

Starchy root vegetables are high in potassium, so should be limited to one portion per day or less. Other starchy foods based on wheat or rice are low in potassium and are good alternatives.

Potato, sweet potato, yam and cassava need to be boiled in plenty of water to reduce their potassium content. Discard the water after boiling and do **not** use the water for soups and sauces.

Keeping the skins on potatoes provide a good source of fibre and B vitamins. However, if your potassium levels are consistently high, peel your potatoes before boiling to help further reduce the potassium content.

Higher potassium foods	Lower potassium alternatives
Steamed, jacket or instant mashed potatoes	150g (3 egg sized) boiled potato, sweet potato, yam, cassava, which can then be mashed, roasted or fried
Frozen, oven, microwave, chip shop chips	White or wholemeal bread or rolls
Manufactured potato products, e.g. hash browns, potato waffles, potato wedges, frozen roast potatoes, potato croquettes	Pitta bread, tortilla wraps
Breads containing nuts, seeds, dried fruit	English muffins, bagels, crumpets, croissants, pancakes
Naan bread (limit to 80g or ½ piece per day)	Garlic bread
Cereals containing bran, dried fruit, nuts and chocolate, e.g. muesli, All Bran, Bran Buds, Sultana Bran, Weetos, Fruit and Fibre, Grape Nuts, Chocolate Crisp	Yorkshire pudding
	Rice
	Pasta/noodles
	Couscous
	Polenta
	Sago, tapioca, semolina
	Millet
	All flours, except potato flour
	Plain cereals, e.g. Weetabix,
	Shredded Wheat, Shreddies,
	cornflakes, Frosties, Special K, Rice
	Krispies, Cheerios, puffed wheat,
	honey puffs
	Porridge

# Meat, fish and vegetarian alternatives

These foods are an important source of protein, which is necessary for growth and repair and the building and maintaining of muscle.

Higher potassium foods	Lower potassium alternatives – your dietitian will let you know the portion size you should eat
Nuts Seeds	<p>Meat (all types) Poultry (all types) Fish and seafood</p> <p><b>Vegetarian</b></p> <p>Eggs Quorn Soy protein (textured vegetable protein) Tofu</p> <p><b>Pulses such as lentils, chickpeas and kidney beans can be eaten in place of meat or fish as a vegetarian meal.</b></p>

## Dairy foods

Higher potassium foods	Lower potassium alternatives
Evaporated milk Condensed milk Milk powders (e.g. Marvel)	<p>Milk (½ pint or 300ml a day) <i>whole, semi-skimmed, skimmed, goat's, soya, lactose-free, almond milk</i></p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>125g pot of fruit/plain yoghurt or fromage frais <b>and</b> 100ml milk</p> <p>Rice and oat milk, crème fraîche and all types of cream may be eaten freely in addition to your milk allowance.</p>

# **Sweet foods: Puddings, desserts, cakes, biscuits, sweets**

If you have diabetes, you may need to limit your intake of sugary foods and drinks.

<b>Higher potassium foods</b>	<b>Lower potassium alternatives</b>
Those containing chocolate, cocoa, dried fruit, coconut or nuts, e.g. fruit cake, banana split, bread and butter pudding (unless containing very little dried fruit), banoffee pie, Christmas pudding, chocolate cake, chocolate mousse, chocolate sauce	Fruit pie/crumble (within fruit allowance) Cheesecake Pavlova, meringue, trifle, jelly Milk puddings, custard Mousse (non-chocolate)
Chocolate bars, carob	Victoria/madeira sponge, Swiss roll
Toffee, fudge	Plain scones, iced buns, jam tarts
Liquorice	Doughnuts, Danish pastry/apple slice
Marzipan	Plain biscuits (digestive, Rich Tea, Marie, etc.) Iced, cream or jam-filled biscuits Shortbread, wafers
	Boiled/chewy/jelly sweets, fruit pastilles Marshmallows, mints, candied popcorn Turkish delight (non-chocolate)

## Savoury snacks: crackers, crisps, nuts

Crisps can be high in potassium. Potato and root vegetables, such as parsnip and beetroot, are naturally high in potassium, so it is better to have lower potassium alternatives.

Higher potassium foods	Lower potassium alternatives
Potato/root vegetable crisps	Corn/maize snacks, e.g. tortilla chips
Nuts	Rice snacks, e.g. Snack-a-jacks, rice cakes
Seeds	Wheat snacks
	Popcorn, pretzels, breadsticks
	Cream crackers, crispbreads, water biscuits
	<b>Check the ingredients and avoid varieties containing potassium chloride</b>

## Beverages

Higher potassium drinks	Lower potassium alternatives
Coffee	Water
Fruit and vegetable juices, smoothies	Camp coffee
Ribena, hi-juice squashes	1 weak cup of coffee a day
Drinking chocolate, Bovril, Complan/	Tea
Meritene	Squash/cordial
Beer, lager, cider,	Fizzy soft drinks (lemonade, Lucozade)
Sherry, port	Ginger beer
Vermouth	Tonic water, soda water
Wine/champagne	Spirits (e.g. gin, whiskey, brandy, vodka)

## Seasonings, spreads/butter, sauces

Higher potassium foods	Lower potassium alternatives
Black treacle	All herbs and spices
Peanut butter	Pepper
Chocolate spread	All chilli sauces, curry powder
Brown sauce	Garlic
Tomato ketchup	Vinegar
Tomato puree, passata	Mayonnaise/salad cream
Marmite/Bovril/Oxo/Vegemite	Mustard, mint sauce, apple sauce
<b>Salt substitutes contain potassium instead of sodium so it is important these are avoided:</b>	Pickle
Lo-Salt, So-Lo, low sodium salt	Gravy granules/powder Jam/marmalade Honey, lemon curd

# MEAL IDEAS

When making dishes such as stir fries, stews, curries and pies, you can use a mixture of lower potassium vegetables with a small amount of onion and mushrooms. Blanching your vegetables in boiling water for 1 minute before using in cooking will also help reduce the potassium content.

## **Pasta sauce**

If making a tomato-based sauce, use less tomato than you usually would. Use tinned tomatoes rather than tomato paste, puree or passata. Flavour the sauce with garlic and herbs as well as lower potassium vegetables (see page 4).

## **Soup**

Packet and tinned soups are high in salt and potassium. To reduce the salt and potassium content you could make your own.

Make a meat or chicken stock or use a ready-made low salt stock, such as Kallo or baby food stock cubes. You can use rice, barley or mini pasta shapes to give it body and cornflour can be used to thicken. Choose lower potassium vegetables (see page 4), blanch them and drain before adding to the stock. Flavour with black pepper and herbs.

## **Eating out**

You can still enjoy eating out, although you may need to plan ahead. For more information, please ask for a copy of our leaflet 'Eating out advice for people following a renal diet'.