

Potassium Diet Information

What does potassium do?

Potassium is a mineral in your cells. It helps your nerves and muscles work as they should. The right balance of potassium also keeps your heart beating at a steady rate. A potassium level that is too high or too low can be dangerous. Too much or too little potassium in your blood can stop your heartbeat. If your levels are high or low, you may need to change the way you eat.

What foods contain potassium?

Milk and milk products contain high amounts of potassium. This includes foods like yogurt, milk-based puddings and custards. Avoid chocolate milk products, as chocolate is high in potassium.

Some whole grain and bran cereals contain a lot of potassium. Switch to more refined cereals that are lower in potassium.

Legumes, nuts, peanut butter and dried fruits such as raisins, apricots, prunes, and dates are rich sources of potassium.

Meat, fish, poultry and eggs are moderate to high sources of potassium. These foods are also good sources of high-quality protein, which you need for normal body functions. Follow the guidelines for protein needed in your diet.

Some fruits and vegetables can also add a lot of potassium to your diet.

Avoid fruits and vegetables high in potassium unless approved by your dietitian.

Limit fruits and vegetables with a medium amount of potassium.

You can eat fruits and vegetables that contain low amounts of potassium (less than 150mg).

A serving size is one half cup cooked or one cup raw.

Check with your dietitian or physician to find out how much potassium your diet will allow

You can control the amount of potassium you get in your diet by being aware of which foods are low or high in potassium.

High Potassium Fruits (over 250 mg)

Avocado

Banana

Cantaloupe

Dried fruits: apricots, dates, figs, prunes, raisins

Guava

Honeydew melon

Kiwi fruit

Mango

Nectarine

Tangelo

Prune juice

High Potassium Vegetables (over 270 mg)

Artichoke

Beet and beet greens

Kohlrabi

Legumes: lima/navy/pinto/kidney beans and peas

Potato: baked/boiled/fried

Pumpkin

Rutabaga

Spinach, cooked

Sweet potato or yams

Tomato

Tomato and V8 juice

Winter squash: acorn, butternut, hubbard

Medium Potassium Fruits (150-250 mg)

Cherries

Figs, 2

Grapefruit

Orange

Fresh peach

Fresh pear

Watermelon

Juice: grape (canned/bottled), grapefruit, orange, pineapple

Medium Potassium Vegetables (150-270 mg)

Asparagus

Brussel sprouts

Cauliflower

Carrots

Corn

Garbanzo beans

Greens, frozen, cooked: collards, kale, turnip

Mixed vegetables

Potatoes, double cooked*

Zucchini boiled

*See double cooking instructions below

How to double cook potatoes (to lower the potassium). Wash and peel the potato. Slice into thin slices. Place the sliced potato in room temperature water. Use two times the amount of water to the amount of potato. Bring to a boil. Drain the water and add two times the amount of water to the amount of potatoes of fresh room temperature water. Boil again.

Low Potassium Fruits (150 mg or less)

Apple

Applesauce

Blackberries

Blueberries

Boysenberries

Canned peaches, pears, fruit cocktail

Canned mandarin oranges

Gooseberries

Grapes

Lemon

Lime

Pineapple (fresh or canned)

Rhubarb

Strawberries

Tangerines

Juice: apple, cranberry, grape (frozen concentrate)

Nectars: peach, pear

Low Potassium Vegetables (150 mg or less):

Broccoli

Bean sprouts

Green, wax beans

Cabbage

Celery

Corn, frozen, boiled

Cucumber

Eggplant

Green peas

Greens, raw: dandelion, mustard, spinach, turnip

Lettuce: cos, endive, iceberg, leaf, romaine, watercress

Mushrooms

Onions

Peppers, sweet or hot

Radishes

Summer squash

Turnips

Water chestnuts canned

Salt Substitutes

Many salt substitutes are made with potassium chloride so you should not use them (i.e. Lite Salt, No Salt, Nu Salt).

Here are some seasonings that you can use freely.

Diamond Crystal Salt Sense

Benson's Gourmet Seasoning's Table Tasty

Mrs. Dash seasoning blends – all types

They use Non-sodium spices and herbs, such as garlic, basil, oregano, pepper, etc.

Some foods and drinks may have hidden potassium. Certain herbal or dietary supplements may also have it. Diet or protein drinks and diet bars often have this mineral. It is also in sports drinks. These are meant to replace potassium you lose during exercise.

To be safe, always read the labels of any prepared foods you buy. Avoid those that list potassium.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911.