

# Low-Potassium Diet

## Why follow a low-potassium diet?

You may need to decrease the amount of potassium in your diet if you have kidney problems or are taking certain medications such as cyclosporine or tacrolimus. Eating too much potassium may be dangerous to your heart.

**Dietitian name**  
**Phone Number**



AMERICAN DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

## IMPORTANT POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Potassium is found in many foods especially milk, fruits, vegetables, dried beans and peas.
- To control potassium levels in your blood, avoid foods like avocados, bananas, dried fruits, dried peas and beans which are **high in potassium**. You should also limit foods that contain a **medium amount of potassium**, like apricots, peaches, broccoli, and mushrooms.
- Salt substitutes and some sodium-modified products contain potassium. Read the labels on these products before purchasing them.
- Talk with your doctor about how much potassium you should have each day. A dietitian can help you make a meal plan to fit your needs.

## NOTES:

## SAMPLE MENU FOR A LOW-POTASSIUM DIET

### BREAKFAST

Cornflakes ( $\frac{1}{4}$  cup) with  
blueberries ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup)  
White toast (2 slices) with  
margarine (2 tsp) and  
jelly (1 tbsp)  
Low-fat milk (1 cup)  
Coffee or tea

### LUNCH

Hamburger (3 oz) on a  
toasted bun with  
mustard (1 tsp) and  
lettuce  
Sliced peeled cucumbers  
( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup)  
Cinnamon applesauce  
( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup)  
Coffee or tea

### SNACK

Graham crackers (4)  
Fresh apple (1)  
Low-fat milk ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup)

### DINNER

Tossed salad (1 cup) drizzled  
with vinegar and oil  
(1 tbsp)  
Broiled savory chicken breast  
(3 oz)  
Herbed brown rice ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup)  
Steamed broccoli ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup)  
Dinner roll (1) topped with  
margarine (2 tsp)  
Low-fat vanilla yogurt (1 cup)  
Coffee or tea

Food Categories	Foods To Omit	Tips
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**BREADS, CEREALS, RICE, AND PASTA 6–11 servings each day**

Serving size = 1 slice bread, 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal, ½ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta; ½ bun, bagel, or English muffin	Bran muffins, dark rye or pumpnickel bread, gingerbread, bran cereal, granola	Avoid whole-grain products made with bran. Sprinkle olive oil and seasoning on pasta instead of tomato-based sauce.
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**VEGETABLES 3–5 servings each day**

Serving size = ½ cup cooked, ¾ cup juice	<p><i>(High-Potassium)</i> Artichokes, avocados, beets, brussels sprouts, cooked celery, chard, Chinese cabbage, okra, parsnips, potatoes, pumpkin, rutabagas, spinach, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, winter squash; tomato and vegetable juice</p> <p><i>(Medium-Potassium)</i> Asparagus, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, corn, eggplant, greens, mushrooms, onions, peas, radishes, sauerkraut, fresh spinach, squash</p>	Avoid high-potassium foods and limit medium-potassium vegetables to 1 serving each day. You can remove some of the potassium from potatoes and other vegetables by peeling, then soaking them in a large bowl for several hours. Drain and rinse before cooking.
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**FRUITS 2–4 servings each day**

Serving size = 1 medium, ½ cup canned or cooked, ¾ cup juice	<p><i>(High-Potassium)</i> Apricots, bananas, cantaloupe, dates, dried figs, honeydew melon, kiwi, mango, nectarines, oranges, papaya, pears, prunes; orange and prune juice</p> <p><i>(Medium-Potassium)</i> Blackberries, cherries, canned figs, fruit cocktail, grapes, grapefruit, mandarin oranges, peaches, pineapple, plums, raisins, watermelon, apples; apricot nectar, lemon juice</p>	Avoid high-potassium foods and limit medium-potassium fruits to 1 serving each day.
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**MILK, YOGURT, AND CHEESE 2–3 servings each day**

Serving size = 1 cup milk or yogurt, 1½ oz natural cheese, 2 oz processed cheese	Malted milk or milk products made with Ovaltine®	All dairy products contain potassium. Limit to 3 servings daily.
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**MEATS, POULTRY, FISH, DRY BEANS AND PEAS, EGGS, AND NUTS 2–3 servings or total of 6 oz daily**

Serving size = 2–3 oz cooked; count 1 egg, ½ cup cooked beans, or 2 tbsp peanut butter as 1 oz meat	Dried peas and beans	Limit meat to 6 oz daily.
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**FATS, SNACKS, SWEETS, CONDIMENTS, AND BEVERAGES**

Low-sodium baking powder, meat extracts, dark brown sugar, chocolate, coconut, licorice, molasses, seeds, maple syrup; barbecue, chili, soy, steak, sweet and sour, teriyaki, and worcestershire sauce	Look for cakes, breads, and muffins made without ingredients high in potassium. Some sports drinks like Gatorade® contain potassium. Read the labels carefully.
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