

Low Potassium Diet

What does potassium do?

Potassium is found in your muscles. Your biggest muscle is your heart. Too much or too little potassium in your blood can stop your heartbeat.

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 to find out how much potassium your diet will allow.

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

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

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.

Salt Substitutes

Many salt substitutes are made with potassium chloride so you should **not** use them (i.e. Lite Salt, No Salt, Nu Salt). Below are some seasonings that you can use freely.

- Vegit® - at Copp's and Sentry food stores in Madison.
- Pleasoning Mini Salt – at Woodman's stores in Madison area, or **www.pleasoning.com** or call 800.279.1614 for a catalog.
- Mrs. Dash – all types.
- Non-sodium spices and herbs, such as garlic, basil, oregano, pepper, etc.

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

Teach Back:

What is the most important thing you learned from this handout?

What changes will you make in your diet/lifestyle, based on what you learned today?

If you are a UW Health patient and have more questions please contact UW Health at one of the phone numbers listed below. You can also visit our website at www.uwhealth.org/nutrition.

Nutrition clinics for UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) and American Family Children's Hospital (AFCH) can be reached at: **(608) 890-5500**.

Nutrition clinics for UW Medical Foundation (UWMF) can be reached at: **(608) 287-2770**.

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. Copyright © 6/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#222