

# Discharge Instructions: Eating a Low-Potassium Diet



Your healthcare provider has prescribed a low-potassium diet for you. This kind of diet is advised for people who have certain kidney problems. Potassium is needed for muscle function. But too much potassium is a health risk. Potassium is found in many foods. Read below to find out how to change your diet.

## Foods to limit

Some foods are high in potassium. Check the nutrition labels of the foods you are eating to see the amount of potassium in these foods. Limit your daily intake of the foods in the list below.

- Fruits: apricots (canned and fresh), bananas, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, kiwi, nectarines, pomegranates, oranges, orange juice, pears, dried fruits (apricots, dates, figs, prunes), and prune juice
- Vegetables: asparagus, avocado, artichoke, bamboo shoots, beets, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, celery, chard, okra, potatoes (white and sweet), pumpkin, rutabaga, spinach (cooked), squash, tomato, tomato sauce, tomato juice, and vegetable juice cocktail
- Legumes: black-eyed peas, chickpeas, lentils, lima beans, navy beans, red kidney beans, soybeans, and split peas
- Nuts and seeds: almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, peanuts, peanut butter, pecans, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, and walnuts
- Breads and cereals: bran and whole-grain products
- Dairy foods: milk, cheese, ice cream, yogurt
- Animal protein: all forms of animal protein
- Other: chocolate, cocoa, coconut milk, and molasses

## Tips

- Ask your healthcare provider how much potassium you are allowed each day. This will help you figure out serving sizes for your needs.
- Check labels for potassium. It may be listed as potassium chloride.
- Don't use salt substitutes. These often have potassium in them.
- Cook frozen fruits and vegetables in water. Rinse and drain them well before eating.
- Drain liquid from all canned fruits and vegetables. Rinse them before eating.
- Reduce the potassium in potatoes. Peel them, slice thinly, and soak in water for at least 4 hours.
- Reduce the potassium in green leafy vegetables. Soak them in water for at least 4 hours.
- Eat white rice and refined white flour products. These include white bread, pasta, and grits.

## Follow-up

Make a follow-up appointment as advised by your healthcare provider.

## When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following:

- Tiredness (fatigue)
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Slow, irregular heartbeat
- Fainting
- Dizziness
- Lightheadedness
- Confusion
- Feeling like your heart is pounding (palpitations)

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