

## Nutrition and Kidney Disease

This resource is for people with kidney disease. There is **no standard** kidney diet, and each person is different. Research findings have changed over the years. Following a healthy dietary pattern e.g. Mediterranean can improve kidney health. Your Dietitian will talk to you about the best foods for you, based on your health needs and blood results.

A healthy dietary pattern can slow your kidney disease by helping you:

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Control blood pressure
- Manage cholesterol
- Achieve good blood glucose control if you have diabetes.

### What can I do?



Eat a wide range of plant-based foods each week. Different colours give your body different nutrients, vitamins and minerals.



Base your meals on wholegrains, beans, nuts, seeds, fresh fruits and vegetables.



Eat moderate amounts of protein to help protect your kidney health.



Use extra virgin olive oil as your main source of fat.



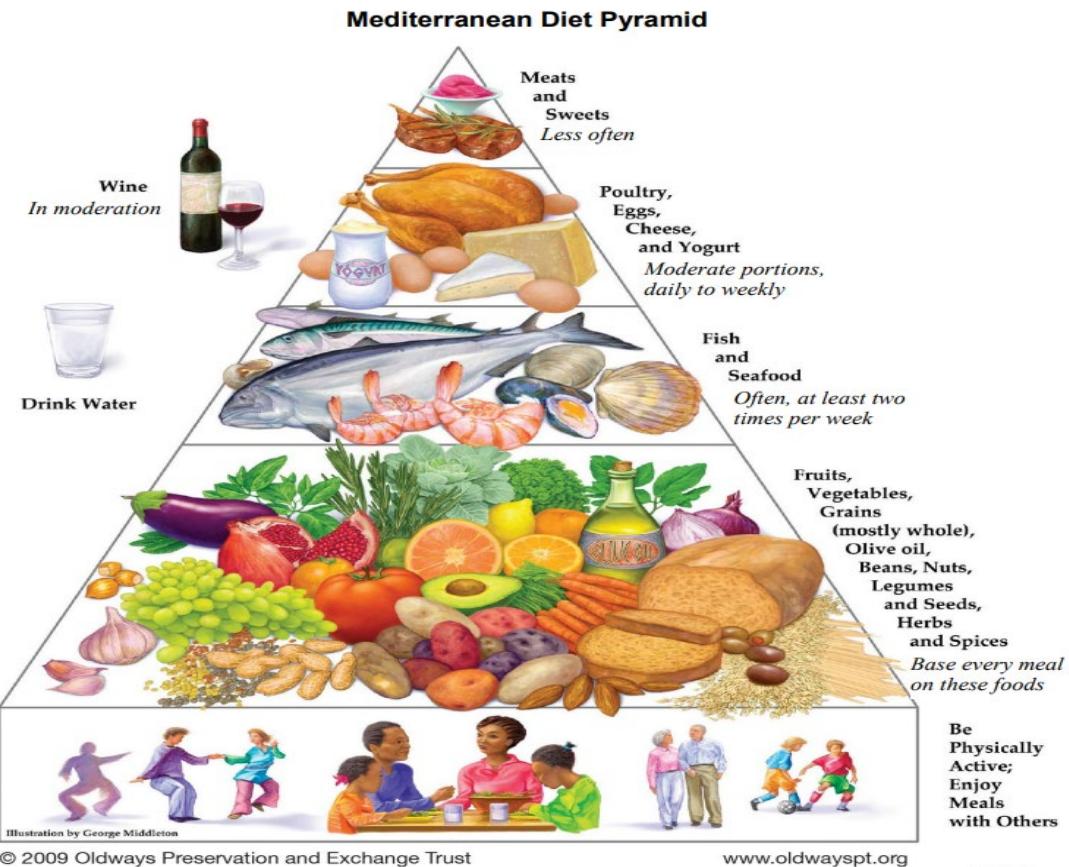
Use herbs and spices to flavour foods instead of salt.



Prepare meals from fresh ingredients. Eat less unhealthy processed foods, takeaways, and soft drinks.



Image: Canada's Food Guide (Government of Canada) copied from version available at: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>



## Limit your salt intake

Reducing salt can slow kidney damage, reduce fluid retention, and improve blood pressure. Fresh foods provide all the salt we need. Allow your taste buds time to adjust to less salt in your meals.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

- Flavour foods with herbs and spices. Try lemon or lime juice, pepper, garlic and parsley.
- Fresh is best. Use fresh foods in cooking when able. For example, use fresh chicken rather than preprepared rotisserie chicken.
- Choose low salt, reduced salt, and no added salt products when available.

✓ **Low Salt: 120mg per 100g or less – best choice**

**Reduced Salt: 400mg per 100g or less – okay choice**

✗ **Salt: >400mg per 100g - limit**

\* Remember salt = sodium when reading food labels

## Fluid

Fluid needs vary from person to person. Drinking too much or too little can damage your kidneys. Drink to thirst. Your doctor will let you know if you need to drink more or less.

## Enjoy moderate amounts of protein:

Protein foods include fish, eggs, dairy products, nuts, seeds, tofu, legumes and pulses, meat and poultry. Legumes and pulses include chickpeas, lentils, split peas, black beans, and kidney beans.

Eating enough protein is important for your body to function well. Eating too much protein can damage kidneys. Your dietitian can help you get the right balance.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

- Consume moderate serves of protein. Include 1½ cups of legumes/pulses/tofu or 100-120g fish, poultry or lean red meat at your main meal. Limit red meat to 1-2 times per week.
- Enjoy at least one ‘meat free’ meal a week based on legumes and pulses. This could include a Mexican dish or a hearty lentil soup.
- Include **more** lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans, baked beans, cannellini beans, black beans, fish, poultry, lean meat, tofu, nuts and seeds. **Reduce** processed meats like ham, bacon, sausages, deli meats, rotisserie chicken.

Swap this:



For this:



## Potassium & Phosphate

Potassium and phosphate are healthy nutrients processed by the kidneys. Potassium helps control blood pressure and phosphate helps keep bones strong. Your levels are regularly checked through blood tests. There are many factors, other than food, that can affect your levels. If your levels are high and your doctor or dietitian can't find any other causes, you may need to change the types or amounts of some foods you are eating. Your dietitian can discuss strategies to suit your individual needs.

## Exercise

Physical activity is important for maintaining good health and quality of life. It can also help to improve blood pressure, diabetes management, strength and fitness. The more active you are, the more you will benefit.



Aim for 30 minutes of exercise each day. You can split this into 3 x 10 minute bursts.



Include muscle-strengthening activities at least twice per week. This could include squats or weightlifting. Household activities that involve lifting, carrying, or digging also count.



Reduce the time you spend sitting. Use a standing desk or enjoy a walk during your lunch break.



Make exercise more consistent by finding an activity that you enjoy! This could include dancing, swimming, gardening, or walking the dog.



Incidental movement also counts. Take the stairs, or park further from the shops. Household activities like vacuuming and mowing the lawn all count.

For more specific advice, ask your doctor to refer you to an exercise physiologist.

## Sample meal and snack ideas for long-term health

### BREAKFAST OPTIONS



- Porridge: rolled oats made with milk, fruit, honey and/or nuts.
- Natural Greek style yoghurt with fruit, nuts or untoasted muesli, and honey.
- Wholegrain breakfast cereal (Weet-Bix, All Bran, Sultana Bran) with milk/yoghurt
- Wholegrain toast with ricotta/cottage/feta cheese OR eggs OR grilled tomato and herbs OR salt reduced baked beans.

### MAIN MEAL OPTIONS



- Salad vegetables with canned beans, legumes, or tuna and extra virgin olive oil.
- Sandwiches/wraps – wholegrain bread, wrap or pita with salad. Use canned fish, beans, hummus, eggs, or chicken breast as a filling.
- Wholemeal pasta with vegetables and extra virgin olive oil or tomato-based sauce. Try replacing meat with canned lentils or beans.
- Vegetable soup, including chickpeas/lentils and vegetables.
- Grilled salmon or tuna with steamed vegetables or salad and basmati rice.
- Homemade pizzas, with a wholemeal bread base and tomato paste. Try vegetable toppings such as onion, eggplant, capsicum, zucchini. Add bocconcini and herbs.
- Chicken breast: stir-fry, baked or grilled in extra virgin olive oil and mixed herbs. Add salad or vegetables and wholemeal pasta or rice.
- Small serve of lean beef, lamb, or kangaroo: stir-fry, baked or grilled in extra virgin olive oil. Add salad or vegetables and canned beans/lentils.

### SNACK OPTIONS



- Small handful of unsalted nuts or seeds
- Fruit (fresh, canned, or dried)
- Fresh vegetable sticks with hummus or tzatziki
- Natural Greek style yoghurt (no added sugar)
- Wholegrain crusty bread dipped in extra virgin olive oil or pesto.
- Avocado, boiled egg, hummus, or feta/ricotta cheese with wholegrain crackers
- Roasted chickpeas/fava beans or unsalted popcorn

### Take Home Messages:

- Base your meals on wholegrains, beans, nuts, seeds, fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Fresh is best. Eat fewer packet, canned and take away foods. Flavour meals with herbs and spices instead of salt.
- Enjoy moderate amounts of protein. Try one 'meat free' meal a week based on legumes and pulses.

### Useful Websites, Recipes and Apps

Kidney Health Australia  <a href="https://www.kidney.org.au/nutrition-and-kidney-disease/resource-library">Nutrition and Kidney Disease Resource Library</a>	Kidney Kitchen  <a href="https://www.kidneycareuk.org/about-kidney-health/living-kidney-disease/kidney-kitchen/recipes/">https://www.kidneycareuk.org/about-kidney-health/living-kidney-disease/kidney-kitchen/recipes/</a>	Calorie King  <a href="https://www.calorieking.com.au/calorie-counter">Food Nutrition Facts and Free Calorie Counter   CalorieKing (Australia)</a>
Australian Heart Foundation  <a href="https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/recipes">https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/recipes</a>	International Federation of Kidney Foundations  <a href="https://ifkf.org/world-kidney-recipes/">https://ifkf.org/world-kidney-recipes/</a>	OLDWAYS – Cultural Food Traditions  <a href="https://oldwayspt.org/traditional-diets">https://oldwayspt.org/traditional-diets</a>
Spice It Up  <a href="https://www.myspiceitup.ca/">https://www.myspiceitup.ca/</a>	Foodswitch  Simply scan a barcode to get its nutrition information and healthier alternatives.  *Available via the App Store or Google Play	Easy Diet Diary  Australian Calorie Counter  *Available via the App Store or Google Play

### Three things I choose to do to improve my kidney health:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

For further information and support contact your Dietitian: \_\_\_\_\_

This is a consensus document from Dietitian/ Nutritionists from the Nutrition Education Materials Online, "NEMO", team.  
Disclaimer: [www.health.qld.gov.au/global/disclaimer](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/global/disclaimer)  
Copyright: [www.health.qld.gov.au/global/copyright-statement](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/global/copyright-statement)

Developed: Sept 2024  
Due for review: Sept 2027

