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2. Potassium chloride

Potassium Chloride

Generic name: potassium chloride [*poe-TASS-ee-um*]

Brand names: Kal Potassium 99, [Klor-Con](#), [K-Tab](#)

Drug class: [Minerals and electrolytes](#)

Medically reviewed by [Melisa Puckey, BPharm](#). Last updated on Feb 29, 2024.

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What is potassium chloride?

[Potassium](#) is a mineral that is found in many foods and is needed for several functions of your body, especially the beating of your heart.

Potassium chloride is used to prevent or to treat [low blood levels of potassium \(hypokalemia\)](#).

Potassium levels can be low as a result of a disease or from taking certain medicines, or after a prolonged illness with diarrhea or vomiting.

Warnings

You should not use potassium chloride if you have high levels of potassium in your blood (hyperkalemia), or if you also take a "potassium-sparing" diuretic.

To be sure potassium chloride is helping your condition, your blood may need to be tested often. Your heart rate may also be checked using an electrocardiograph or ECG (sometimes called an EKG) to measure electrical activity of the heart. This test will help your doctor determine how long to treat you with potassium. Do not miss any scheduled appointments.

Serious side effects of potassium include uneven heartbeat, muscle weakness or limp feeling, severe stomach pain, and numbness or tingling in your hands, feet, or mouth.

Do not stop taking this medicine without first talking to your doctor. If you stop taking this medicine suddenly, your condition may become worse.

Do not crush, chew, break, or suck on an extended-release tablet or capsule. Swallow the pill whole. Breaking or crushing the pill may cause too much of the drug to be released at one time. Sucking on a tablet can irritate your mouth or throat. Take potassium chloride with food or just after a meal.

Before taking this medicine

You should not use potassium chloride if you are allergic to it, or if:

- you have high levels of potassium in your blood (hyperkalemia); or
- you take a "potassium-sparing" diuretic (water pill) such as amiloride, spironolactone, or triamterene.

To make sure this medicine is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- kidney disease;
- cirrhosis or other liver disease;
- an adrenal gland disorder;
- a large tissue injury such as a severe burn;
- severe dehydration;
- diabetes;
- heart disease or high blood pressure;
- stomach or intestinal bleeding;
- a blockage in your stomach or intestines; or
- chronic diarrhea (such as ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease).

It is not known whether this medicine will harm an unborn baby. Your dose needs may be different during pregnancy. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Do not give this medicine to a child without medical advice.

 [Potassium chloride pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (more detail)

How should I take potassium chloride?

Take potassium chloride exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow all directions on your prescription label and read all medication guides or instruction sheets. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose.

Read and carefully follow any Instructions for Use provided with your medicine. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you do not understand these instructions.

Take potassium chloride with a full glass of water. **Take potassium chloride with food or just after a meal if this medicine upsets your stomach.**

Measure liquid medicine with the dosing syringe provided, or with a special dose-measuring spoon or medicine cup. If you do not have a dose-measuring device, ask your pharmacist for one.

Do not crush, chew, or suck on a tablet or capsule. Sucking on the pill could irritate your mouth or throat.

Call your doctor if you have trouble swallowing a potassium chloride capsule or tablet. You may be able to dissolve the tablet in water, or mix the medicine from a capsule with soft food. **Carefully follow your doctor's instructions.**

Mix the powder form of this medicine with at least 4 ounces (one-half cup) of cold water or fruit juice before taking. Drink the mixture slowly, over 5 to 10 minutes in all. To make sure you get the entire dose, add a little more water to the same glass, swirl gently and drink right away.

To be sure this medicine is helping your condition, you may need frequent blood tests. You may not notice any change in your symptoms, but your blood work will help your doctor determine how long to treat you with potassium chloride. Your heart function may need to be checked using an electrocardiograph or ECG (sometimes called an EKG). Even if you have no symptoms, tests can help your doctor determine if this medicine is effective.

Your treatment may include a special diet. Follow the diet plan created for you by your doctor or nutrition counselor. Get familiar with the list of foods you should eat or avoid to help control your condition.

Potassium-rich foods include: squash, baked potatoes (skin on), spinach, lentils, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, zucchini, kidney or navy beans, raisins, watermelon, orange juice, bananas, cantaloupe, and low-fat milk or yogurt. Consume only the daily amounts recommended by your doctor or nutrition counselor.

Some tablets are made with a shell that is not absorbed or melted in the body. Part of this shell may appear in your stool. This is normal and will not make the medicine less effective.

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat. Keep the medication in a closed container.

 [Detailed Potassium chloride dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next scheduled dose. Do not take extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

Overdose symptoms may include irregular heartbeats, chest pain, or muscle weakness.

What to avoid

Avoid taking supplements or using other products that contain potassium without first asking your doctor. Salt substitutes or low-salt dietary products often contain potassium. If you take certain products together you may accidentally get too much potassium. Read the label of any other medicine you are using to see if it contains potassium.

Potassium chloride side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to potassium chloride**: hives; difficult breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Stop using this medicine and call your doctor at once if you have:

- severe throat irritation;
- stomach bloating, severe vomiting, severe stomach pain;
- **high potassium level** - nausea, weakness, tingly feeling, chest pain, irregular heartbeats, loss of movement; or
- **signs of stomach bleeding** - bloody or tarry stools, coughing up blood or vomit that looks like coffee grounds.

Common potassium chloride side effects may include:

- nausea, vomiting, diarrhea;
- gas, stomach pain; or
- the appearance of a potassium chloride tablet in your stool.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Potassium chloride side effects](#) (more detail)

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What other drugs will affect potassium chloride?

Tell your doctor about all your current medicines and any you start or stop using, especially:

- a diuretic or "water pill"; or
- heart or blood pressure medication.

This list is not complete. Other drugs may interact with potassium chloride, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Not all possible interactions are listed in this medication guide.

 [Potassium chloride drug interactions](#) (more detail)

Does potassium chloride interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

+

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Other brands

Klor-Con, K-Dur, K-Tab, Micro-K, ... +4 more

Related treatment guides

- [Hypokalemia](#)
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Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use potassium chloride only for the indication prescribed.


Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

[Medical Disclaimer](#)


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DRUG STATUS

Availability

 Rx and/or OTC


Pregnancy & Lactation

 Risk data available

CSA Schedule*

N/A Not a controlled drug

Approval History

 Drug history at FDA



User Reviews & Ratings

[35 Reviews](#)

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