

CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE: STAGE 4

Stage 4 CKD (chronic kidney disease) signifies a severe decrease in kidney function. At this stage, it is crucial to closely monitor your health, work with healthcare professionals, and follow a specialized diet plan. Here are some details related to Stage 4 CKD:

Symptoms:

- Fatigue
- Fluid retention
- Swelling in the legs, ankles, or feet
- Shortness of breath
- Decreased urine output
- Increased blood pressure
- Abnormal blood tests (e.g., high creatinine, high potassium, low calcium)

Causes:

The common causes of CKD include:

- *Diabetes*: High blood sugar levels can damage the blood vessels and nephrons (functional units of the kidneys).
- *High blood pressure*: Persistent high blood pressure can strain the blood vessels in the kidneys, leading to kidney damage.
- *Glomerulonephritis*: Inflammation of the kidney's filtering units, known as glomeruli, can impair kidney function.
- *Polycystic kidney disease*: Inherited condition characterized by the formation of fluid-filled cysts in the kidneys, which gradually replace normal kidney tissue.

Severity:

- Stage 4 CKD indicates severe kidney damage, with a GFR (glomerular filtration rate) between 15-29 ml/min/1.73m².
- At this stage, kidney function is significantly reduced, and there is a high risk of developing complications.

Diet Recommendations:

- **Protein Intake**: Protein intake may be restricted based on individual needs and the presence of proteinuria. Work with a registered dietitian to determine the appropriate amount of protein for your specific situation.
- **Sodium Intake**: Limit sodium intake to manage blood pressure and fluid retention. Avoid processed and packaged foods and limit added salt.
- **Phosphorus and Potassium Intake**: Limit high-phosphorus and high-potassium foods based on individual needs and lab results. Work with a dietitian to determine the specific restrictions.
- **Fluid Intake**: Fluid intake may be restricted based on individual needs and urine output. Follow the guidelines provided by the healthcare team.
- **Carbohydrates**: Monitor carbohydrate intake, especially if you have diabetes, and follow a diabetic meal plan.
- **Fats**: Include healthy fats in moderation, such as avocado, olive oil, canola oil, nuts (in moderation), and seeds.

- Vitamins and Minerals: Consider working with a dietitian to assess your nutritional needs and determine if any supplements are necessary.
- Meal Planning and Portion Control: Plan meals and snacks to ensure a balanced intake of nutrients. Practice portion control to manage calorie intake and maintain a healthy weight.

When it comes to food choices for Stage 4 CKD (chronic kidney disease) patients, it is important to follow a kidney-friendly diet that helps manage symptoms, slows down the progression of kidney damage, and prevents complications. Here are some food items that are generally recommended for Stage 4 CKD patients:

1. Fruits: Apples, berries (blueberries, strawberries), cherries, grapes, peaches, pears (in limited amounts)
2. Vegetables: Broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, peppers, spinach, kale, cabbage, green beans, zucchini, eggplant
3. Whole Grains: Brown rice, quinoa, whole wheat bread, oats, barley, whole grain pasta
4. Lean Proteins: Skinless chicken or turkey, fish (such as salmon, tuna, or tilapia), eggs (limit yolk), tofu, tempeh
5. Dairy and Dairy Alternatives: Low-fat milk, yogurt, cheese (in moderation), almond milk, coconut milk (in moderation)
6. Healthy Fats: Avocado, olive oil, canola oil, nuts (in moderation, such as almonds, walnuts), seeds (chia seeds, flaxseeds)
7. Fluids: Water, herbal tea (unless fluid restriction is advised), clear broths