

## Low Potassium Diet

### What is potassium?

- Potassium is a mineral that helps your nerves and muscles work well
- You may need to have less potassium in your diet if you are taking certain medications, have problems with your kidneys or have a medical condition that lowers your need for potassium.

### What is a normal potassium level?

- A normal blood potassium level for adults is 3.5-5.2mmol/L
- The potassium level in your blood will be monitored by your doctor



### What foods are high in potassium?

Almost all foods contain potassium, but some contain much more than others. Foods high in potassium include:

- Certain fruits, vegetables, and juices
- Whole grain bread and pasta, brown and long grain rice, whole grain cereal and bran products
- Milk products
- Bean and legumes
- Nuts and seeds
- Some *processed/seasoned/enhanced/frozen* meat, poultry, and fish products



## How can I control my potassium levels?

- Limit and avoid foods high in potassium (see tables on the following page)
- Do not use salt substitutes such as potassium chloride instead of salt

- *Remember that serving size matters.* Even low potassium foods can make your potassium level high if you are having too many of them. Speak with your Registered Dietitian about the number of servings that is right for you



- Pay attention to cooking methods as this can affect the amount of potassium in some foods. For example:

- ½ cup of raw spinach will shrink to 1 Tbsp when cooked. Therefore eating ½ cup of cooked spinach will have **a much** higher potassium content than ½ cup of raw spinach.
- You can reduce the amount of potassium in root vegetables by boiling them in large amounts of water



- Do not use the liquid from canned, cooked, or frozen fruits and vegetables
- Read ingredient lists on packaged foods and avoid potassium chloride

## Fruits

*1 serving is equal to ½ cup unless otherwise noted*

Lower Potassium		Higher Potassium	
Apple (1)	Lemon (1)	Apricots	Dates
Apple rings (5)	Lime (2)	Banana	Nectarine
Applesauce	Loganberries	Breadfruit	Orange (large)
Blackberries	Lychees (10)	Cantaloupe	Papaya
Blueberries	Mandarin orange	Coconut (dried)	Passion fruit
Boysenberries	Mango (1/2)	Coconut (raw)	Persimmon
Canned fruit	Peach (1)	Dried fruit (all types)	Pomelo (1/2)
Casaba melon	Pear (1)	Durian	Prickly pear (1)
Cherries (10)	Pineapple	Elderberries	Raisins (1 box)
Clementine (1)	Plum (1)	Figs	Sapote
Crab-apple	Pomegranate (1/2)	Guava	Sugar apple
Cranberries	Prunes (2)	Honeydew melon	Tamarind
Currants	Raspberries	Kiwi (1)	
Fruit cocktail	Rhubarb		
Gooseberries	Strawberries		
Grapefruit (1/2)	Tangelo (1)		
Grapes (20)	Tangerine (1)		
Kumquats (5)	Watermelon		

## Juices and Nectars

*1 serving is equal to half a cup and included as part of your fruit serving*

Lower Potassium		Higher Potassium	
Apple juice	Lemon/Lime juice	Carrot juice	Pomegranate juice
Apricot nectar	Papaya Necta	Clamato juice	Prune juice
Blackberry juice	Peach nectar	Coconut juice	Tangerine juice
Cranberry juice	Pear nectar	Coconut water	Tomato juice
Grape juice	Pineapple juice	Grapefruit juice	V8 juice (regular)
Guava nectar	Passion fruit juice	Orange juice	Vegetable juice

## Vegetables

*1 serving is ½ cup unless otherwise noted*

Lower Potassium		Higher Potassium	
Alfalfa sprouts	Fiddlehead green (boiled)	Acorn squash	Mushrooms: dried; portabella
Arugula (raw, 1 cup)	Kale (raw)	Artichoke	Parsnips
Asparagus (6 spears)	Leeks	Avocado (1/2)	Parsnips
Bamboo shoots (canned)	Lettuce (1 cup)	Baked beans	Plantain
Beans (green)	Mushrooms: Canned (drained), shitake (raw), white (raw)	Beans: navy, black, pinto, kidney, red, lima, roman, mung, white	Potato
Bean sprouts			Potato chips
Beet greens (raw)			Rapini (cooked)
Broadbeans (fresh,boiled)	Mustard greens	Bamboo shoots (fresh)	Rutabaga
Broccoli	Okra	Beets	Snow peas (cooked)
Cabbage	Onion (all types)	Bok choy	Soybeans
Carrots (baby, 8)	Peas (green)	Broadbeans (canned)	Spinach (cooked)
Carrot (regular)	Peppers	Brussel sprouts (4)	Split peas
Cauliflower	Radish	Burdock root	Succotash
Celeriac (cooked)	Rapini (raw)	Butternut squash	Sweet potatoes
Celery (1 stalk)	Snow peas (raw, 10)	Casava	Swiss chard (cooked)
Chayote	Spaghetti squash	Celeriac (raw)	Taro (cooked)
Chicory greens (1 cup)	Spinach (raw, 1 cup)	Chick peas	Tempeh
Collard greens	Swiss chard (raw)	Cress (cooked)	Tomato paste
Corn	Tomato, cherry (5)	Dock (sorrel)	Tomato sauce
Cress (raw)	Tomato (1/2)	French fries	Water chestnuts (raw)
Cucumber	Turnip	Lentils	Yam
Dandelion greens	Watercress (raw)	Lotus root	Zucchini (cooked)
Eggplant	Water chestnuts (canned)		
Endive (1)	Wax beans		
Fennel	Zucchini (raw)		

Milk Products	
Lower Potassium	Higher Potassium
Vanilla almond milk ( <i>speaking with your RD about serving sizes</i> ), rice milk, nondairy creamer (Coffee Mate, Coffee Rich), cheddar cheese, Swiss cheese, cottage cheese, mozzarella cheese, colby cheese	Milk, chocolate milk, cream, yogurt, ice-cream, pudding, soy beverage, coconut milk, kefir
Grains	
Lower Potassium	Higher Potassium
Bread: any bread, bagels, rolls, or tortillas made with white flour, light rye, or 60% whole wheat	Bread: any bread, bagels or rolls made with whole grain, 100% whole wheat or dark rye
Cereal: any corn or rice-based cereals (i.e. Corn Flakes <sup>®</sup> , Rice Krispies <sup>®</sup> , Cream of Rice <sup>®</sup> ) cream of wheat, non-bran cereals	Cereal: bran or whole grain cereal, granola, shredded wheat, cereals containing dried fruit or nuts
Crackers: low sodium crackers made with white flour, graham crackers, matzo crackers, soda crackers, regular low sodium tortilla chips (not whole grain), white melba toast, white rice cakes	Crackers: any made from whole wheat, grains, or dark rye
Rice/pasta: white rice, white pasta, white noodles	Rice/pasta: brown rice, long grain rice, whole wheat pasta
Baked goods: arrowroot, angel food cake, blueberry muffins, pound cake, shortbread, social teas, sponge cake, sugar cookies, vanilla wafers, white or yellow cake	Baked goods: Danish, doughnuts, date square, fruit cake, gingerbread, gingersnap, granola bar, peanut butter cookie, any baked good made from whole wheat/grains and chocolate
Other: cornmeal, white couscous (1/3 cup), white flour	Other: barley, buckwheat, bulgur, nuts/seeds, pancake/waffle mix, wheat germ, whole wheat flour
Additional Items	
Lower Potassium	Higher Potassium
Herbs and spices, herb mixes	Salt substitutes (i.e. No Salt <sup>®</sup> , Nu-Salt <sup>®</sup> , Half-Salt <sup>®</sup> )
Butter, margarine, oil, mayonnaise	Salt-free cheese with potassium added
Sugar or sugar substitutes, honey, jam, jelly, pancake or corn syrup	Brown sugar, molasses, maple sugar or maple syrup
Regular brewed coffee and tea, drink crystals, fruit punch, lemonade, Kool-Aid <sup>®</sup> , soft drinks (non-colas)	Specialty coffee (cappuccino, espresso, Turkish), cocoa and chocolate drinks

## Label Reading

- Potassium is not one of the 13 core nutrients required in the nutrition facts table, therefore it does not need to be listed. **Even if potassium is not listed it can still be in the food.** Go back to the list of ingredients to check for potassium-rich foods. Avoid foods that have ingredients that are high in potassium, such as banana, molasses, orange, potato, potassium chloride (KCl), potassium lactate, and potassium phosphates (ex: potassium tripolyphosphate, sodium potassium hexametaphosphate, tetrapotassium pyrophosphate).
- **Caution:** Products that are reduced in sodium (for example: low sodium soups) may have large amounts of added potassium as potassium chloride (KCl). These are high-potassium foods.
- Diet drinks may have acesulfame potassium or acesulfame K added as a sweetener. The amounts of potassium vary in these drinks. Speak with your dietitian.
- Remember to check ingredient lists regularly, as manufacturers may change product ingredients.
- Companies may have a website or consumer line to contact for information on potassium content. You can also ask your dietitian.

My target potassium level is: \_\_\_\_\_

My current potassium level is: \_\_\_\_\_

**My Goals:** (e.g., I will choose cranberry juice instead of orange juice.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Dietitian: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: 905-378-4647 ext \_\_\_\_\_