

## Potassium and Diet

People with kidney disease usually need 2000-2500 milligrams of potassium per day.

### What is potassium?

Potassium is a mineral found in many foods. It helps to control nerve and muscle function, which includes the heart. Healthy kidneys balance potassium in the body by filtering out extra potassium in the urine. When the kidneys are not working properly, the amount of potassium in the blood can rise quickly.

### What is a safe blood level of potassium?

Medical professionals at UC Davis Health consider a potassium level of 3.3 – 5.0 mg/dL to be normal. Normal ranges may vary from one institution to another. Ask your doctor or dietitian about your potassium level. The symptoms of high potassium in the blood may include weakness, numbness, or tingling and may be life-threatening.

### Why does potassium need to be restricted?

High potassium in the blood can cause irregular heartbeats, resulting in a heart attack. As your kidney function worsens, you will need to limit high potassium foods. Your doctor will check your potassium levels regularly and decide when it is necessary for you to limit potassium in your diet.

### What can be done to avoid build-up of potassium in the blood when kidney function is limited?

Dialysis will help to remove extra potassium from the blood but you will still need to limit high potassium foods to control potassium levels between treatments. Your dietitian will help you plan your diet so you get the right amount of potassium.



**Points to remember:**

- Eat a variety of foods in moderation.
- Choose adequate portions of lower potassium foods to keep your potassium level within normal range. Eating more than 1 portion of a lower potassium food will increase your total potassium intake.
- Keep an eye on serving sizes. Remember that most foods have some potassium.
- Do not drink or use the liquid from canned vegetables and fruit.
- Check the ingredients list on packaged foods. Avoid foods that have ingredients with “potassium” in the name (such as potassium chloride).

High Potassium (more than 200 mg per serving)		Lower Potassium (less than 200 mg per serving)	
<b>Fruits:</b>			
Avocado (½ medium)	487 mg	Apple (1 small)	159 mg
Banana (1 small)	362 mg	Apple juice (½ c)	150 mg
Cantaloupe (1 c cubed)	428 mg	Applesauce (½ c)	78 mg
Casaba melon (1 c cubed)	310 mg	Apricot, fresh (1 small)	90 mg
Cherimoya (1 fruit)	674 mg	Apricot, canned (½ c)	175 mg
Dates, chopped (½ c)	482 mg	Apricot, nectar (½ c)	143 mg
Dried fruit (½ c)	848 mg	Blackberries (½ c)	116 mg
Figs, dried (½ c)	500 mg	Blueberries (½ c)	57 mg
Fig, fresh (2 medium)	232 mg	Boysenberries (½ c)	92 mg
Grapefruit (1 medium)	356 mg	Cactus (nopales), cooked (½ c)	145 mg
Guava (1 fruit)	229 mg	Cactus (nopales), raw (½ c)	111 mg
Honeydew (1 c cubed)	388 mg	Cherries, fresh (½ c)	85 mg
Jackfruit (½ c)	370 mg	Clementine (1 fruit)	131 mg
Kiwi (1 small)	215 mg	Coconut, shredded (1 oz)	156 mg
Mango (1 small)	323 mg	Cranberries raw (½ c) or dried (⅓ c)	40 mg
Nectarine (1 medium)	281 mg	Cranberry juice (½ c)	23 mg
Orange (1 small)	238 mg	Cranberry sauce (½ c)	36 mg
Papaya (1 small)	286 mg	Fruit cocktail, canned (½ c)	113 mg
Passion fruit (½ c)	410 mg	Grapes (½ c)	88 mg
Peach, fresh (1 medium)	247 mg	Grape juice (½ c)	132 mg
Pear, fresh (1 medium- 5 oz)	212 mg	Grapefruit juice (4 oz)	95 mg
Plantain (½ c)	465 mg	Guava nectar (½ c)	200 mg
Pomegranate (1 fruit)	666 mg	Kumquat (1 fruit)	35 mg
Prunes (½ c)	635 mg	Lemon (1 fruit)	80 mg
Pummelo (½ c)	205 mg	Lime (1 fruit)	68 mg
Pumpkin (½ c)	280 mg	Loquats (½ c)	198 mg
Raisins (¼ c)	272 mg	Lychee (½ c)	162 mg
Sapodilla (1 fruit)	328 mg	Mandarin oranges, canned (½ c)	129 mg
Soursop pulp (½ c)	313 mg	Peaches, canned (½ c)	91 mg
Tamarind pulp (½ c)	377 mg	Peach nectar (½ c)	50 mg
		Pears, canned (½ c)	119 mg
		Pear nectar (½ c)	16 mg
		Persimmon (1 fruit)	103 mg
		Pineapple (½ c)	78 mg
		Pineapple juice (½ c)	162 mg
		Plum (1 fruit)	104 mg
		Quince (1 fruit)	181 mg
		Raspberries (½ c)	93 mg
		Rhubarb, cooked (½ c)	115 mg
		Rhubarb, raw (½ c)	175 mg
		Strawberries (½ c)	127 mg
		Tangerine (1 small)	126 mg
		Watermelon (1 c)	170 mg

High Potassium (more than 200 mg)		Lower Potassium (less than 200 mg)	
<b>Vegetables:</b>			
Artichoke (½ c) 1 Medium	343 mg	Arugula (1 c)	74 mg
Bamboo shoots, cooked (½ c)	320 mg	Asparagus (4 spears)	135 mg
Beets, cooked (½ c)	260 mg	Bamboo shoots, canned (½ c)	55 mg
Beet greens (½ c)	654 mg	Beans: green, wax (½ c)	72-105 mg
Bok choy (½ c)	420 mg	Beets, canned (½ c)	130 mg
Broccoli, cooked (½ c)	332 mg	Bell peppers, fresh, cooked (½ c)	112 mg
Brussel sprouts (½ c)	247 mg	Bell peppers, frozen, cooked (½ c)	48 mg
Burdock root (½ c)	225 mg	Bell peppers, raw (½ c)	80 mg
Carrots, cooked (1/2 c)	266 mg	Broccoli, frozen, cooked (½ c)	130 mg
Carrots, raw (½ c)	204 mg	Broccoli, raw (½ c)	144 mg
Cassava (yucca root) (½ c)	271 mg	Cabbage, cooked (½ c)	73 mg
Chard, cooked (½ c)	480 mg	Calabash (gourd) (½ c)	124 mg
Chili peppers, raw (Pasilla) (½ c)	260 mg	Cauliflower, fresh, cooked (½ c)	88 mg
Chinese cabbage, Pak choi (½ c)	315 mg	Cauliflower, frozen, cooked (½ c)	125 mg
Chipotle peppers in adobo sauce (½ c)	264 mg	Celery (½ c)	131 mg
Collards, frozen, cooked (½ c)	245 mg	Chayote (½ c)	140 mg
Kohlrabi, raw (½ c)	236 mg	Chili peppers, canned (½ c)	79 mg
Kohlrabi, cooked (½ c)	280 mg	Corn, fresh, cooked (½ c)	198 mg
Mushroom, Portobello (1 c diced)	315 mg	Corn, frozen, cooked (½ c)	160 mg
Mushrooms, cooked (½ c)	404 mg	Cucumber (½ c)	76 mg
Mung beans (½ c)	270 mg	Daikon, raw (½ c) or relish (1 oz)	50 mg
Parsnip (½ c)	286 mg	Eggplant (½ c)	61 mg
Peas: split, black-eyed (½ c)	345 mg	Endive (½ c)	78 mg
Potato (1 medium)	321 mg	Green onions (scallions) (½ c)	56 mg
Potatoes, mashed (½ c)	240 mg	Greens, cooked: collards (fresh), kale, dandelion, mustard, turnip (½ c)	110-150 mg
Rutabaga, cooked (½ c)	276 mg	Hominy (½ c)	7 mg
Salsify (oyster plant) (½ c)	250 mg	Jalepeño peppers (½ c)	111 mg
Spinach, canned (½ c)	370 mg	Jicama (½ c)	90 mg
Spinach, fresh, cooked (½ c)	419 mg	Leeks, cooked (½ c)	45 mg
Spinach, frozen, cooked (½ c)	287 mg	Lettuce: iceberg, Romaine (1 c)	116 mg
Squash: acorn, butternut (½ c)	220-246 mg	Mushrooms, white, raw (½ c)	111 mg
Sweet potato (½ c)	548 mg	Okra (½ c)	108 mg
Taro root, cooked (½ c)	427 mg	Onions (1 small)	101 mg
Tomato, fresh (1 medium)	405 mg	Peas, green, cooked (½ c)	174 mg
Tomato, canned (½ c)	220mg	Pickles (1 large)	124 mg
Tomato juice (4 oz)	278 mg	Radish (½ c)	135 mg
Tomato sauce (2 Tbsp)	324 mg	Salsify, cooked (½ c)	195 mg
Tomato soup (½ c)	284 mg	Seaweed kelp (2 Tbsp)	9 mg
Vegetable juice (½ c)	234 mg	Serrano peppers (½ c)	160 mg
Water chestnuts, raw (½ c)	362 mg	Spinach, raw (1 c)	170 mg
Yam (1 medium)	289 mg	Squash: crookneck, hubbard, scallop, spaghetti, straightneck (½ c)	91-168 mg
Zucchini, cooked (½ c)	289 mg	Tomatillos (2 medium or ½ c)	180 mg
		Turnips, cooked (½ c)	106 mg
		Water chestnuts, canned (½ c)	83 mg
		Zucchini, raw (½ c)	147 mg



High Potassium (more than 200 mg per serving)		Lower Potassium (less than 200 mg per serving)	
<b>Others:</b>			
Beans: black, kidney, red, pinto, refried (½ c)	305-478 mg	Almond milk (1 c)	160 mg
Chocolate (1.5 oz)	206 mg	Bread, white (1 slice)	69 mg
Cocoa, instant (6 oz)	200 mg	Cereal, Cheerios® (1 c)	171 mg
Coconut milk (1 c)	500 mg	Cereal, corn flakes (1 c)	18 mg
Coconut water (1 c)	600 mg	Cereal, puffed rice (1 c)	16 mg
Custard (½ c)	209 mg	Cheese (1 oz)	28-50 mg
Granola (½ c)	225 mg	Cottage cheese (½ c)	97 mg
Lentils, cooked (½ c)	365 mg	Coffee (6 oz)	54-87 mg
Milk (1 c)	366 mg	Flan (½ c)	181 mg
Milkshake (1 c)	416 mg	Hummus (2 Tbsp)	68 mg
Molasses (1 tsp)	293 mg	Nondairy creamer (1 Tbsp)	6 mg
Mole sauce (Poblano) (½ c)	798 mg	Oatmeal (½ c)	71-82 mg
Nuts (1 oz)	206 mg	Pasta, cooked (½ c)	30 mg
Nut butters (2 Tbsp)	240 mg	Pudding (½ c)	70-199
Salt substitute, e.g. Morton Salt Substitute®, Nu Salt® (¼ tsp)	610-795 mg	Rice, cooked (½ c)	44 mg
Soy milk (1 c)	300 mg	Rice milk (1 c)	70 mg
Tempeh (4 oz)	342 mg	Salt-free seasoning: Mrs. Dash® (¼ tsp)	10 mg
Wheat bran (½ c)	343 mg	Seitan (4 oz)	85 mg
Yogurt (6 oz)	190-300 mg	Sunflower seeds, in shell (½ c)	148 mg
		Sunflower seed butter (2 Tbsp)	184 mg
		Tapioca (½ c)	100 mg
		Tea (6 oz)	35 mg
		Tofu, cooked (4 oz)	166 mg
		Tortilla, corn or flour (1 each, 6")	45 mg

Although meats and other protein foods are higher in potassium, it is important that you eat some of these foods every day. If your potassium level is high, talk with your dietitian to decide how much protein you should be eating.

Meats and Other Proteins			
Beef, cooked (3 oz)	360 mg	Tuna, canned (3 oz)	204 mg
Chicken breast, cooked (3 oz)	215 mg	Turkey, cooked (3 oz)	264 mg
Egg (1 whole)	81 mg	Shrimp, cooked (3 oz)	155 mg
Fish, salmon (3 oz)	312 mg	Veal, cooked (3 oz)	276 mg
Fish, catfish (3 oz)	356 mg	Wild game: bison, cooked (3 oz)	325 mg
Pork, cooked (3 oz)	308 mg	Wild game: rabbit, cooked (3 oz)	292 mg