

Potassium and CKD

(Chronic Kidney Disease)

Finding a balance



Potassium and your kidneys

- Potassium is a mineral found in most foods
- You need the right amount of potassium to keep your heart beating
- Healthy kidneys keep potassium in balance in your body
- If you have kidney disease, your kidneys may not be able to remove extra potassium, so it can build up in your body

What happens when potassium is out of balance?

- Your heartbeat can become irregular and you could have a heart attack
- You may feel fine even though your potassium is out of balance

How much potassium do you need?

- **Your potassium lab should be between 3.5 and 5.5**
- If it's too high, you may need to cut down on potassium.
- If you are too high or too low, a dietitian can help you get back into a healthy range

Following a low potassium diet

- A low potassium diet is **2000-3000 mg per day**
- Learn what foods have more potassium
- Choose foods that help you stick within your limit
- **You can still eat the foods you like, but you need to learn how much is safe**

What foods are highest in potassium?

- Fruits and vegetables
- Milk and milk products
- Foods containing **potassium chloride**, such as “lite” salt and some “reduced sodium” products—check labels and avoid these!

If you are taking diuretics (water pills)

- These medications remove potassium from your body
- If you are taking these, you may need more potassium
- Ask your doctor about your lab values