

# WHAT IS A LOW POTASSIUM DIET?

You may have been told by your medical team that you need to follow a low potassium diet.

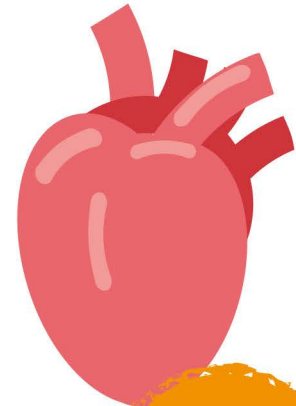
**But, what is a low potassium diet? Let's start with the basics!**

## What is potassium?

Potassium is a mineral. Minerals are found in foods. Potassium is a special type of mineral called an electrolyte. Electrolytes like potassium help to keep things in balance in your body.

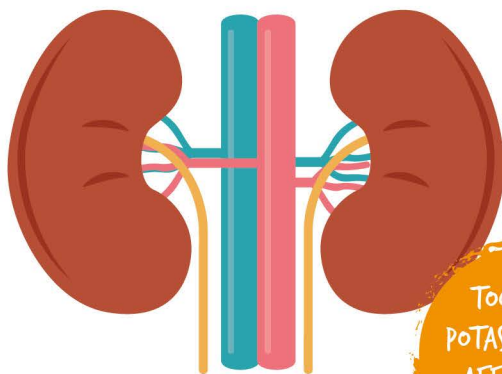
Potassium does lots of jobs in the body including:

1. Making sure the right amount of water is in the body.
2. Helping the heart to work properly.
3. Ensuring our bodies use energy and protein.
4. Making sure the right amount of acid is in the body.



POTASSIUM  
HELPS MAKE THE  
HEART WORK

## What happens when the kidneys are not working very well?



Too MUCH  
POTASSIUM CAN  
AFFECT THE  
HEART

The kidneys will usually get rid of any extra potassium that we don't need. However, when the kidneys are not working well, too much potassium may be left in the body.

This can affect the heart and therefore it may be important to limit the number of foods and drinks that you have which contain a lot of potassium.

# CONTINUED...

## How do I get the right amount of potassium?

The following foods have high amounts of potassium in them. You may need to limit these in your diet. Please follow the advice your Dietitian provides regarding which food and drinks you can and cannot have.



Food manufacturers sometimes use potassium containing additives in processed foods. This can mean processed foods often contain more potassium than fresh foods. Therefore, try to make meals using fresh ingredients whenever possible.

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The following foods contain less potassium. You could try these instead of the high potassium foods listed on the previous page:



## What else can I do to reduce my potassium intake?

The way we cook our food can sometimes affect the potassium content of that food or meal. Here are some low potassium cooking tips:



- boil all vegetables rather than using a steamer, microwave or pressure cooker.



- peel potatoes and cut into small pieces before boiling.



- do not use the vegetable water to make soups or gravy (as it will be rich in potassium).



- avoid salt substitutes as they contain potassium.



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## My low potassium meal plan

For my breakfast I can choose:

For my mid-morning snack I can choose:

For my lunch I can choose:

For my mid-afternoon snack I can choose:

For my evening meal I can choose:

My drinks throughout the day:

Always check with your Dietitian regarding which foods you can have and which foods you should limit in your diet. Everyone's needs are different.

