

FOODS

HEALTHY

containing potassium are **FRUITS, VEGETABLES, LEGUMES, NUTS AND WHOLE GRAIN CEREALS**. In these foods **the potassium is naturally there**.

These **healthy potassium containing foods** have **nutrients and fibers good for your body**.

UNHEALTHY

with potassium are the **ultra-processed foods** with potassium **additives are not naturally present in the food** and can increase the blood potassium more than the potassium naturally present in the food.

ULTRAPROCESSED FOOD

are the foods that we buy read-to-eat in the supermarket, and usually have a lot of salt, fat and additives with potassium and phosphate. Examples: **SNACKS** (potato chips and others), **PROCESSED MEATS** (Mortadella, ham, sausages, salami, smoked turkey), **READY TO DRINK MILK-DRINKS** (cocoa-milk drinks), **POWDERED MILK** and **PROCESSED JUICES**. **BEVERAGES CONTAINING ELECTROLYTES**, LIKE THE **SPORTS DRINKS** CONTAIN potassium **ADDITIVES**. Wines (red and white) can also contain potassium additives.

14

14 potassium additives that can be used in foods and beverages but are not listed in food labels. **Ultraprocessed foods are a hidden source of potassium.**

Fruits and vegetables with low potassium content (< 200 mg of K/serving)

FRUITS

- 1 medium persimmon
- 1 medium slice of pineapple
- 1 medium apple
- ½ of medium mango
- 1 medium pear
- 1 medium peach
- 1 medium fresh plum
- 10 small strawberries
- 1 cup of blueberry
- 1 cup of raspberries
- ½ cup blackberry
- 40 mL of lemon juice
- 1 tangerine / clementine

RAW VEGETABLES

- 5 lettuces leaf
- 1 cup of watercress
- 1 cup of sliced cucumber
- 1 cup of cabbage
- 5 radishes
- 1 medium tomato italian
- ½ of medium carrot

Fruits and vegetables with higher potassium content (> 200 mg of K/serving)

FRUITS

- 1 medium **banana**
- 1 slice of melon cantaloupe
- 1 slice of watermelon
- 1 orange
- 1 grapefruit
- 1 **kiwi**
- ½ **avocado**, black or green skin
- Coconut water** from one fruit
- Coconut, fresh
- 1 cup (cubes) of papaya
- 10 grapes
- 1 cup of cherries
- 3 passion fruits

RAW VEGETABLES

- 1 cup of kale
- 1/2 cup beet
- 1 cup of broccoli

Nutrient source: USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) Food Composition Tables.

Fruits/vegetables marked in red have higher K concentration and should be avoided



POTASSIUM



A collaboration between ERN and the ERA Cookbook



WHAT IS POTASSIUM?

Potassium is a mineral that helps to control essential body functions. The potassium in the blood of individuals with chronic kidney disease can increase. For this reason, **the amount of potassium in the diet needs to be carefully balanced.**

WHERE DO I FIND

Potassium is present in many foods and beverages, specially fruits and vegetables and ultra-processed foods.

Potassium is described as "K" in the food labels.

The amount of potassium in food varies depending on the type of food.



If I have chronic kidney disease, and blood POTASSIUM IS HIGH (> 5 mEq/L),

WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH THE DIET?

1

Talk to the dietitians from your clinic and ask them to **ADAPT YOUR DIET** to your individual needs. If this is not possible, the following information will help you to choose the food you eat.

2

It is important not to exclude all the **HEALTHY FOOD WITH POTASSIUM** from your diet. Among the **HEALTHY FOODS**, here it is what you can do:

a **Substitute high potassium fruits and vegetables for low potassium ones** as shown in the Table in this handout. The amount is individualized, but normally, 3 servings of low potassium fruits/day and 2 servings of raw vegetables/day is well tolerated even if the blood potassium is high.

b For the vegetables and beans, follow the procedure **to cook those in water** described in the other handout.

c **Canned fruits and vegetables may contain potassium additives.** Therefore, prefer using the fresh ones. But if you use canned fruits or vegetables, drain the water from the can and wash the fruits/vegetables in water before consuming it.

d **All nuts** have high potassium content. If the potassium from your blood is high, **it is better to avoid them.**

3

AVOID EATING FOODS AND BEVERAGES THAT ARE ULTRAPROCESSED.



If I have chronic Kidney disease and the blood POTASSIUM IS NORMAL,

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

1

FOODS AND BEVERAGES THAT ARE ULTRAPROCESSED SHOULD BE AVOIDED even if the blood potassium is normal.

2

If your glomerular filtration rate is below 15 ml/min/1.73 m² and you are not in dialysis, follow the same recommendations for those with high potassium level.

3

Prefer the **FRUITS AND VEGETABLES WITH LOW POTASSIUM CONTENT.** Use the cooking procedure to eliminate part of the potassium from the vegetables and beans.

ARE THERE OTHER FOODS THAT CONTAIN POTASSIUM?

Other high containing potassium foods are **chocolates, dried fruits, instant coffee and powdered milk.** If the blood potassium is high, avoid those.

VERY IMPORTANT!

Do not use salt substitutes that contain KCl (potassium chloride). These salts are recommended for people with high blood pressure, but individuals with chronic kidney disease should not use those.

Star fruit is the only **food prohibited** from the diet of **patients with chronic kidney disease** not due

to its potassium content, but due to a neurotoxin that cannot be depurated by the dialysis. The ingestion of star fruit by patients with chronic kidney disease can cause seizures, coma and even death.

