

## 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 m<sup>2</sup> 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.

