

Hemodialysis Food Guide

My Nutrition Plan

Now that you are on hemodialysis, you may need to make some changes to your diet. Making changes can be hard and take time, but can make a difference in how you feel. Your dietitian can review your bloodwork, fluid gains, and diet with you. They can also help you to make changes that work for you.

My nutrition goals:

Check the goals that apply to you.

- Eat less sodium and salt (page 3)
- Drink the right amount of fluids (page 4)
- Eat the right amount of protein (page 5)
- Eat the right amount of phosphorus (page 6)
- Eat the right amount of potassium (page 7)
- Other:

How to Use the Hemodialysis Food Guide

This food guide uses traffic signals to help guide you in your food choices based on your nutrition goals.



Go means choose these foods most often.



Yield means limit these foods. Slow down – think carefully about your choices.



Stop means avoid these foods.

Tips for Starting Hemodialysis

Some people on hemodialysis have trouble eating enough food. This can be caused by:

- nausea and vomiting when you start on dialysis
- missing meals because of your dialysis appointments, and travel to and from appointments
- being too tired to make meals

Try these tips to help you eat enough in a day:

- Split your meals into 5 or 6 smaller ones. For example, eat a small breakfast, and then eat again mid-morning.
- Bring snacks or a meal to appointments and when you travel.
- When you feel well, cook larger amounts and freeze meals in single portions.
- Add healthy fats to your food, such as olive or canola oil, to get extra calories.

My Renal Dietitian

Name:

Phone number:

For more support















- Talk to your healthcare team.
- Call Health Link at 811 and ask to talk to a dietitian or complete a [self-referral form](#) on ahs.ca/811.
- Visit ahs.ca/nutrition.

Eat Less Sodium and Salt

Most of the sodium and salt we eat comes from processed, packaged, and restaurant foods. Sodium also comes from the salt we add at the table or in cooking.

Too much sodium in your diet can make you thirsty and make your body hold on to fluid. When your kidneys are not working well this extra fluid causes swelling, makes your heart work harder, and can make it harder to breathe. Eating less sodium can help manage these problems.

Choose These foods are lower in sodium.

			
Cold or hot cereal	Crackers, unsalted	Eggs	Fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables
			
Herbs and spices	Lemon or citrus	Pasta	Rice
			
Soup, unsalted homemade	Vinegar	Less than 1 Tbsp (15 mL) condiments a day	Less than 1 Tbsp (15 mL) dressing a day

Avoid These foods are higher in salt (sodium).

				
Chips, pretzels, or popcorn, salted	Packaged dinners	Pickled products	Processed cheese, spreads	Processed meats
				
Restaurant foods	Salt, sea salt, or seasoning that contains salt	Soup, packaged or canned	Soy, fish, or steak sauce	

Drink the Right Amount of Fluids

Anything that is liquid at room temperature counts as a fluid. Drink the right amount of fluid to prevent swelling (fluid gain). Gaining too much fluid may cause high blood pressure, shortness of breath and swelling in wrists and ankles. Ask your dietitian how much fluid is right for you.

You can drink up to _____ cups or _____ mL of fluid in 24 hours.

1 cup = 8 fluid ounces = 250 mL

				
Water	Coffee and tea	Coffee drinks and blended drinks	Gelatin dessert	Gravy and sauce, low salt
				
Ice	Ice cream and sherbet	Juice	Juice from canned fruit	Milk and plant-based beverages
				
Nutrition supplement drink	Pop and sports drinks	Soup, low salt	Alcohol (ask your doctor about it)	

Limiting fluids may help you feel better

If you need to limit fluids, here are tips to help with thirst and dry mouth:



Eat less salty foods and sodium.



Eat frozen fruits like grapes, berries, peaches, or pineapple chunks.



Suck on a few ice chips or a sugar-free frozen ice pop.



Take your pills with soft foods like applesauce, instead of liquid.



Drink from a small cup or water bottle.



Suck on sugar-free hard sour candies or chew sugar-free gum.

Eat the Right Amount of Protein

Your best sources of protein are animal foods such as fish, poultry, eggs, pork, and beef. Other foods high in protein are milk products, beans and lentils, nuts and nut butters, seeds (pumpkin, sunflower), tofu, and nutrition supplements. Choose unprocessed protein foods most often.

Your body needs protein every day to build, repair, and maintain your body tissue. It also helps your body fight infections and helps wounds heal.

You may need to eat more protein now that you are on dialysis. Ask your dietitian how much protein is right for you.

Choose  Include a protein food at each meal.



Beef, bison, pork,
or lamb



Chicken or turkey



Cottage cheese
($\frac{1}{4}$ cup or 60 mL)



Eggs



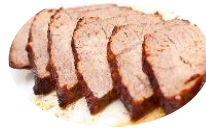
Fish or shellfish



Hard cheese
(1 oz or 30 g)



Milk
($\frac{1}{2}$ cup or 125 mL)



Wild game



Yogurt or yogurt drinks *
($\frac{1}{2}$ cup or 125 mL)



Beans, peas and
lentils



Fortified soy
beverage*



Peanut or nut
butter



Tofu

* May contain phosphate additives. Check the ingredient list if you need to manage your phosphorus levels.

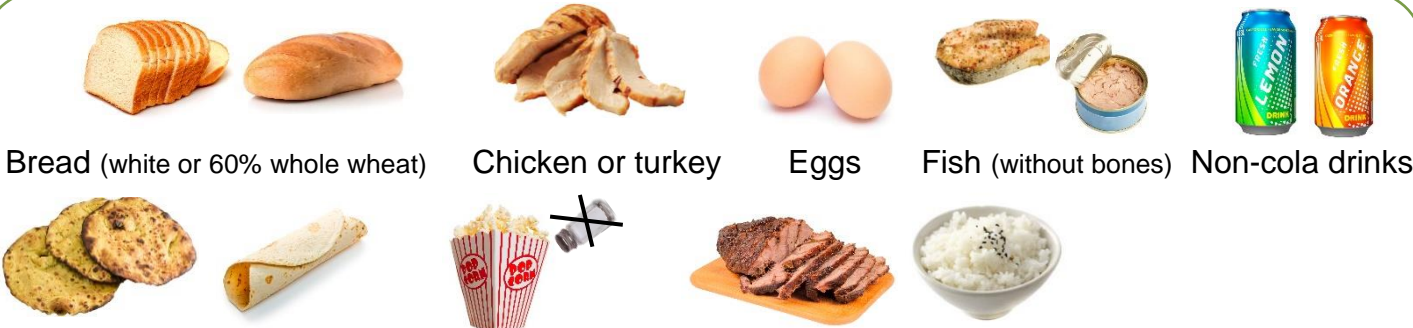
Eat the Right Amount of Phosphorus

Phosphorus is a mineral your body needs to work properly. When your kidneys are not working well, phosphorus builds up in your blood. When your blood phosphorus levels are too high, this may cause sore joints, weak bones, and heart disease. Food choices can affect your blood phosphorus level.

Limit or avoid packaged foods that have phosphate additives. Your body absorbs phosphorus from additives more easily than phosphorus that is naturally in foods. Every time you shop, look for the words *phosphorus*, *phosphate*, or *phosphoric* on ingredient lists.

You may be asked to take phosphorus binders if your blood phosphorus levels are too high. Phosphorus binders are pills that act like a sponge. They soak up phosphorus from your food and stop it from being absorbed into your blood.


Choose  **These foods are lower in phosphorus.**



Bread (white or 60% whole wheat) Chicken or turkey Eggs Fish (without bones) Non-cola drinks

Pita, wraps, chapatti, roti (white or 60% whole wheat) Popcorn, unsalted Roast meat White rice

Limit  **These foods contain phosphorus. They are okay to eat in small amounts.**



Brown or wild rice Chocolate (15 g a day) Dried beans, peas and lentils (½ cup/125 mL a day) Hard cheese (1 oz or 30 g) Homemade pancakes, waffles, and biscuits

Milk (½ cup or 125 mL) Tofu (½ cup/125 mL a day) Whole grain breads and cereals Yogurt (½ cup or 125 mL)

Avoid  **These foods are high in phosphorus.**



Processed meat Cola and diet cola drinks Fish with edible bones (sardines, canned salmon with bones) Food with phosphorus additives






Eat the Right Amount of Potassium

Potassium is found in most foods, especially fruits and vegetables. When your kidneys are not working properly, potassium can build up in your blood. Too much or too little potassium in your blood can cause your heart to beat too fast, too slow or to stop beating. Food choices can affect your blood potassium levels. Ask your dietitian how many servings of potassium foods you can have from each group.






Limit or avoid foods with potassium additives. Some packaged foods have potassium additives. Every time you shop, look for the word *potassium* in the ingredient list on food packages.

Choose  **These foods are low in potassium.**











Serving sizes are $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL) or 1 medium unless another amount is listed.

					
Apple	Beans (green, yellow)	Berries	Broccoli	Cabbage	Carrot
					
Lettuce	Mandarin orange	Pear	Potato (peeled, cut into small pieces, then boiled)	Tomato ($\frac{1}{2}$ raw, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup or 60 mL sauce)	

Limit  **These foods contain potassium.**

				
Coffee, tea (2–3 cups or 500–750 mL)	Dried beans, peas, lentils (cooked, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup or 125 mL a week)	Milk or yogurt ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup or 125 mL)	Nuts, seeds, nut butters (2 Tbsp or 30 mL)	Whole grain breads and cereals

Avoid  **These foods are high in potassium.**

					
Salt substitute (No Salt®, Half-Salt®)	Food with potassium additives	Avocado	Banana	Bok choy	Brussels sprouts
					
Coconut milk	Oranges, orange juice	Potato (baked, fries, chips)	Tomato (canned, cooked, or paste; $\frac{1}{2}$ cup or 125 mL sauce)		

Do not eat or drink **starfruit** and **starfruit juice**. These are dangerous if your kidneys are not working well.

Tips for Reading Labels

Chicken Soup

Ingredients: Water, Carrots, Seasoned Chicken White Meat (Chicken White Meat, Water, Sodium Phosphate), Celery, Noodles (Durum Wheat Semolina, Dried Egg White), Green Peas, Onion Powder, Salt, Potassium Chloride, Herbs. Contains: Egg, Soy, Wheat.

Nutrition Facts

Per 1 cup (250 mL)

Calories 70	% Daily Value*
Fat 1.5 g	2 %
Saturated 0 g	0 %
+Trans 0 g	
Carbohydrate 10 g	
Fibre 1 g	4 %
Sugars 2 g	2 %
Protein 4 g	
Cholesterol 5 mg	
Sodium 510 mg	22 %
Potassium 250 mg	5 %
Calcium 20 mg	2 %
Iron 0.75 mg	4 %

*5% or less is a little. 15% or more is a lot

Food labels give you information to help you compare similar foods and make healthier choices.

The ingredient list

- Ingredients are listed by weight from most to least.
- The first few ingredients are those in the highest amounts.

Limit or avoid foods with potassium or phosphate additives. Look for the words phosphorus, phosphate, phosphoric or potassium in the ingredients list.

Choose foods that have sodium listed near the end of the ingredients list. Sodium can be called salt, sodium, or soda in the ingredient list.

The Nutrition Facts Table

- The serving size is listed at the top of the Nutrition Facts table. If you eat more or less than the listed serving size, you will get more or less of the nutrients listed.
- A 5% or less Daily Value means it has a little, a 15% or more Daily Value means it has a lot.

Choose foods with lower % Daily Value and smaller amounts of sodium and potassium. Look for foods with 5% Daily Value or lower.

Phosphorus is not often listed on the Nutrition Facts Table. To choose foods with less phosphorus, read the ingredients list and avoid foods with phosphate additives.

Tips for Eating Away from Home

- Look at the menu or ask what will be served ahead of time.
- Order smaller portions, share a meal or save some of your meal to take home.
- Ask for sauces and salad dressings on the side.
- Be aware of how much fluid you are served. Ask for a smaller cup or for a cup that is only half full.
- Pack healthy snacks to bring with you.

My Notes