

# Food IQ for People with Kidney Disease

As kidney function declines, protein waste and minerals become hard to remove, and diseased kidneys must work harder to get rid of them. Each person's kidney diet prescription is different, but the main nutrients limited in kidney diets include protein, phosphorus, potassium and sodium. Read on to enhance your kidney-friendly food IQ.

## Wise up with water

Choose tap or plain bottled water, mineral water or flavored sparkling water. Specialty waters may be enhanced with sodium, potassium or phosphate additives.

## Choose your brew

Home-brewed tea and homemade lemonade are ideal alternatives to water. Some bottled or canned beverages are loaded with phosphates, so it's better to limit them.

## Pick your poultry

Choose fresh poultry and pork. Many enhanced and pre-cooked products (including broth, nuggets and strips) contain greater amounts of sodium, phosphate and potassium additives.

## Go organic

Make homemade low-sodium soup with organic or homemade stock.

## Tap into your vegetarian side

Eat meatless meals or plan entrées that use modest amounts of meat to reduce protein and thus added stress on your kidneys. Meatless meals have fewer saturated fats to boot, which is good news for your heart.

## Some cheese, please

Select strong-flavored natural cheeses and limit the amount you eat to 1-2 ounces to help decrease your intake of saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium and phosphorus.

## “A” is for antioxidants

Eat antioxidant-rich apples, berries, cherries, red grapes, cabbage, cauliflower, garlic, onions and red bell peppers to help decrease chronic inflammation associated with kidney disease, cardiovascular disease and cancer.

## Power up with protein

Choose egg whites and high omega-3 fish as your protein source. Regardless of your protein level, plan at least half from high-quality sources such as these to receive all the essential amino acids. Egg whites are very low in phosphorus; fish such as salmon, trout and tuna reduce inflammation associated with kidney and heart disease.

## Trim the fat

Replace unhealthy fats such as shortening, animal fats and hydrogenated margarine with healthy fats, such as olive oil and trans fat-free margarine.

Resources: Davita.com