

PHOSPHORUS AND FOOD



What is phosphorus?

Phosphorus is a mineral found in the body that is needed to keep your bones healthy. When your kidneys work well, they remove extra phosphorus from your blood and prevent high levels of serum phosphate that can be harmful to your body.

Why do I need to eat less phosphorus?

When your kidneys are not working well phosphorus can build up in your blood. Too much phosphorus in your blood pulls calcium from your bones making them weak. If the level of phosphorus in your blood remains high, the phosphorus and calcium can deposit in your blood vessels and tissues which can lead to heart disease and stroke. Most people with kidney disease need to eat foods with less phosphorus than they are used to eating.

Which foods contain phosphorus?

Phosphorus is added to many foods in the form of additives during processing by the food industry for many reasons. Phosphorus additives are very easily absorbed by your body. They are often found in processed foods such as sausages, ham, instant noodles, and fizzy drinks. Phosphorus is also found naturally in many foods, especially protein foods. Red meat, chicken, pork, eggs, milk, nuts, seeds, and legumes contain phosphorus. Your body does not absorb all of the phosphorus in these foods.

My blood phosphate levels:

(ask a nurse or doctor to fill in your last 3 phosphate results so you can see your trend)

DATE	MY SERUM PHOSPHATE	TREND
	mmol/L	(increasing, decreasing, stable)
	mmol/L	
	mmol/L	

HOW CAN I EAT LESS PHOSPHORUS?

* Ask to see a dietitian for further information

BUY FRESH AND UNPROCESSED FOODS OFTEN

Have plenty of fruits and vegetables because they do not have any phosphorus. Choose fresh meat, chicken, and fish without extra sauces, seasonings, and coatings as they will have less phosphorus.

EAT LESS PROCESSED AND PACKAGED FOODS

Processed and packaged foods such as chicken nuggets, crumbed fish fillets, ready-made sauces, and chips are more likely to contain phosphorus additives. Your body very easily absorbs this type of phosphorus. Ask your dietitian to show you how to find phosphorus additives on a nutrition label.

COOK AT HOME USING FRESH AND UNPROCESSED INGREDIENTS

Cooking your meals at home means you can control what ingredients are being added. Boiling protein foods such as meat also helps to remove extra phosphorus. Remember to drain and throw away the cooking water afterwards.

EAT THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF PROTEIN FOODS

Protein foods include meat, fish, chicken, eggs, and dairy. Vegetarian protein such as beans, lentils, and chickpeas are a great option too. Ask your dietitian how much protein you should be eating.

TAKE YOUR PHOSPHATE BINDERS

If you are taking a phosphate binder medication (Calci-Tab or Alu-Tab) remember to take it just before your meals. It helps to bind the phosphorus in food so less goes into your blood.