Potassium-rich foods

Potassium is a mineral that is found in many foods. Your body uses potassium to make your heart beat, to turn food into energy and to help your kidneys work. Getting enough potassium can also help lower your risk of heart disease and stroke. Like other minerals, you can't see or taste potassium.

You may have been told you need extra potassium. Some of the reasons you might need more potassium are:

- you are taking certain medications such as diuretics (water pills)
- you are losing too much potassium (from sweat, vomiting or diarrhoea)
- you have high blood pressure.

Foods high in potassium

- Fruit including apricots, avocado, banana, honeydew melon, kiwifruit, nectarines, oranges and orange juice. Also dried fruit such as apricots, raisins, dates and prunes.
- Vegetables including broccoli, courgette, kumara, potato, pumpkin, silver beet, spinach and tomato.
  - Fill half of your plate with vegetables.
  - Cook vegetables with only a small amount of water.
  - Try steaming, baking or microwaving. This limits the amount of potassium lost in the cooking water.
- Milk and yoghurt.
- Meat, chicken and fish.
- Legumes like dried peas and lentils. Also beans such as baked beans, bean salad, kidney beans and cannellini beans.
- Nuts and seeds.
- Wholegrain breads and cereals.

Eat a variety of foods to help you get enough potassium.
What about supplements and salt substitutes with potassium?

Potassium can also come from other sources such as supplements and salt substitutes. But unless your doctor recommends you take a supplement or salt substitute, the best way to get potassium is from food.

Written by HealthInfo clinical advisers. Last reviewed October 2018.