



## The Renal Diet - Phosphorus

The kidneys help with calcium and phosphorus balance in the body. Both are needed to keep the bones healthy and strong. When kidney function goes down, phosphorus levels can get too high. The body then cannot take in enough calcium, causing the body to “steal” calcium from the bones. Stealing calcium from the bones can lead to weak and brittle bones over time. Other problems with high phosphorus levels include itchy skin and bone or joint pain.

Patients with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) should limit the intake of high-phosphorus foods in their diet. If the phosphorus level stays high, even with a low phosphorus diet, a special medicine may be given by your doctor to help get rid of extra phosphorus. This medicine is called a phosphate binder. It binds with phosphorus in the foods eaten and gets rid of it in the stool. Phosphate binders should be taken with your meals and often with snacks. Your doctor will tell you if you need to take a phosphate binder.

Foods **high** in phosphorus to limit include:

Dairy Foods	Fruits/Vegetables	Other Foods
Cheese	Dried beans (pinto, lima, soy, kidney beans)	Biscuits/baking mixes
Ice cream (sherbet is ok)	Broccoli	Bran cereals/Bran products
Milk	Mushrooms	Cheerios
Pudding	Raisins/Dried fruits	Whole wheat cereals
Yogurt	Dried peas (blackeyed, split peas)	Chocolate
		Clams & sardines
		Colas, dark-colored
		Cornbread
		Lentils
		Nuts & seeds
		Peanut butter
		Oatmeal
		Rice, brown or wild

Phosphorus is often added to processed or packaged foods. Look for “phos” on ingredient label, such as pyrophosphate. Examples of foods with added phosphorus: chicken nuggets, baking mixes, frozen baked goods, cereals, instant puddings.

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## Phosphorus Foods to Limit

Dark colas (Pepsi, Coke or root beer)

Oatmeal

Processed meats

Liver

Sardines

\*Limit meat servings to 2-3 ounces or the size of a deck of cards.

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## BETTER Phosphorus Food Choices

Clear colored sodas (Ginger Ale, Sprite, etc) -  
*Diet soda if diabetes*

Cream of Wheat, grits

Fresh chicken

Fish

Shrimp

Eggs

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## Foods High in Phosphorus and Potassium

Hard cheese (1 oz or one slice)

Chocolate desserts, pudding

Cream soups

Peanut butter

Milk and yogurt - Limit to ½ cup daily

Cooked beans, peas, lentils - Limit to ½ cup servings

Ice cream

Nuts and seeds- Limit to ¼ cup

Whole grains, such as wheat bread, bran cereal, pasta, wild or brown rice

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## BETTER Phosphorus and Potassium Food Choices

Low-fat cream cheese (1 oz)

White cakes (angel food), Desserts made with lemon or apple, Rice Krispy treats  
(Diabetics: consult with physician)

Broth-based soups (low sodium)

Low-fat cream cheese, jam or fruit spread

Coffeemate or Coffee Rich (1/2 cup)

Green beans (fresh or frozen), wax beans, string beans

Sherbet, popsicles, sorbet

Unsalted popcorn, salt-free pretzels, rice cakes

White bread, corn and rice cereals, white pasta, white rice, couscous, graham crackers, melba, salt-free saltines