



Potassium



Maintaining a normal potassium balance is important, as high, or low potassium levels in your blood can affect your heartbeat.

Most foods and beverages contain potassium. By managing the intake of these foods, we can help manage our potassium levels.

- Do not use salt substitutes made with potassium chlorides such as NuSalt®, NoSalt® and HalfSalt®.
- Avoid foods that list potassium or the chemical symbols (K, KCl and K+) as an ingredient on the label.
- Season foods with herbs and spices.
- DO NOT EAT starfruit (also known as carambala, bilimbi, belimbing, Chinese starfruit, star apple) if you have kidney problems.
- For more information, speak to your health care provider about a referral to a dietitian.



Potassium Intake

Potassium is a mineral that has many important roles within your body, including regulating your heartbeat and blood pressure. Maintaining a normal potassium balance is important, as high, or low potassium levels in your blood can affect your heartbeat.

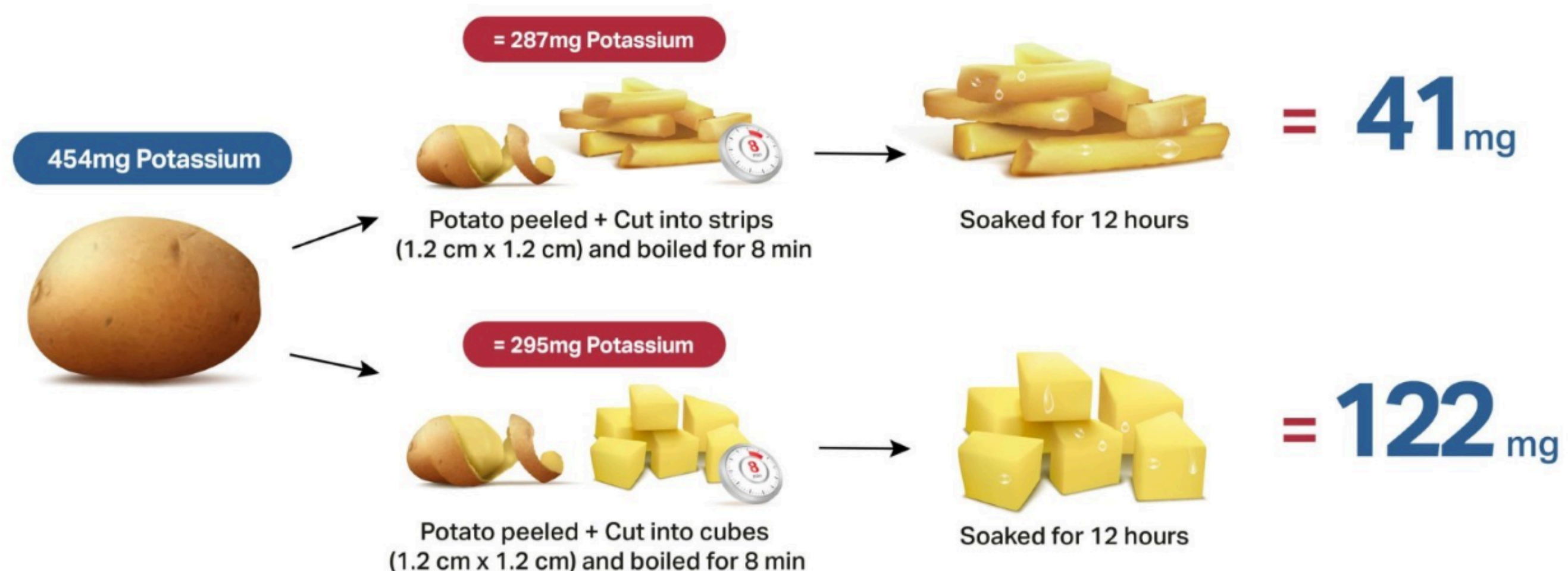
Most foods and beverages contain potassium but in different amounts. If your potassium level is too high and you have been advised by your cardiologist to lower it, changes in your diet can help.

Some medications can also increase your potassium level. If this is the case, your health care team may need to change or adjust a medication accordingly.

Potassium and Potatoes

Potatoes are very high in potassium. However, the way a potato is prepared can reduce its potassium, allowing them be part of a potassium-reduced diet.

Follow the steps listed below when preparing your potatoes to reduce your potassium intake.



Reference: Montserrat Martinez-Pineda, Cristina Yague-Ruiz, Antonio Vercet-Tormo: Is it possible to include potato in the diet of chronic kidney disease patients? New culinary alternatives for limiting potassium content; Journal of Renal Nutrition, Vol 30, No 3 (May), 2020 pp 251-260



For more information, visit ourhearthub.ca

Potassium and Legumes

Legumes (lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans, soybeans, etc.) are high in protein, fiber, vitamins, minerals, and certain phytochemicals, such as isoflavones. Legumes are often a part of a Mediterranean diet. Several studies have demonstrated that the regular consumption of legumes provides benefits to adults with type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

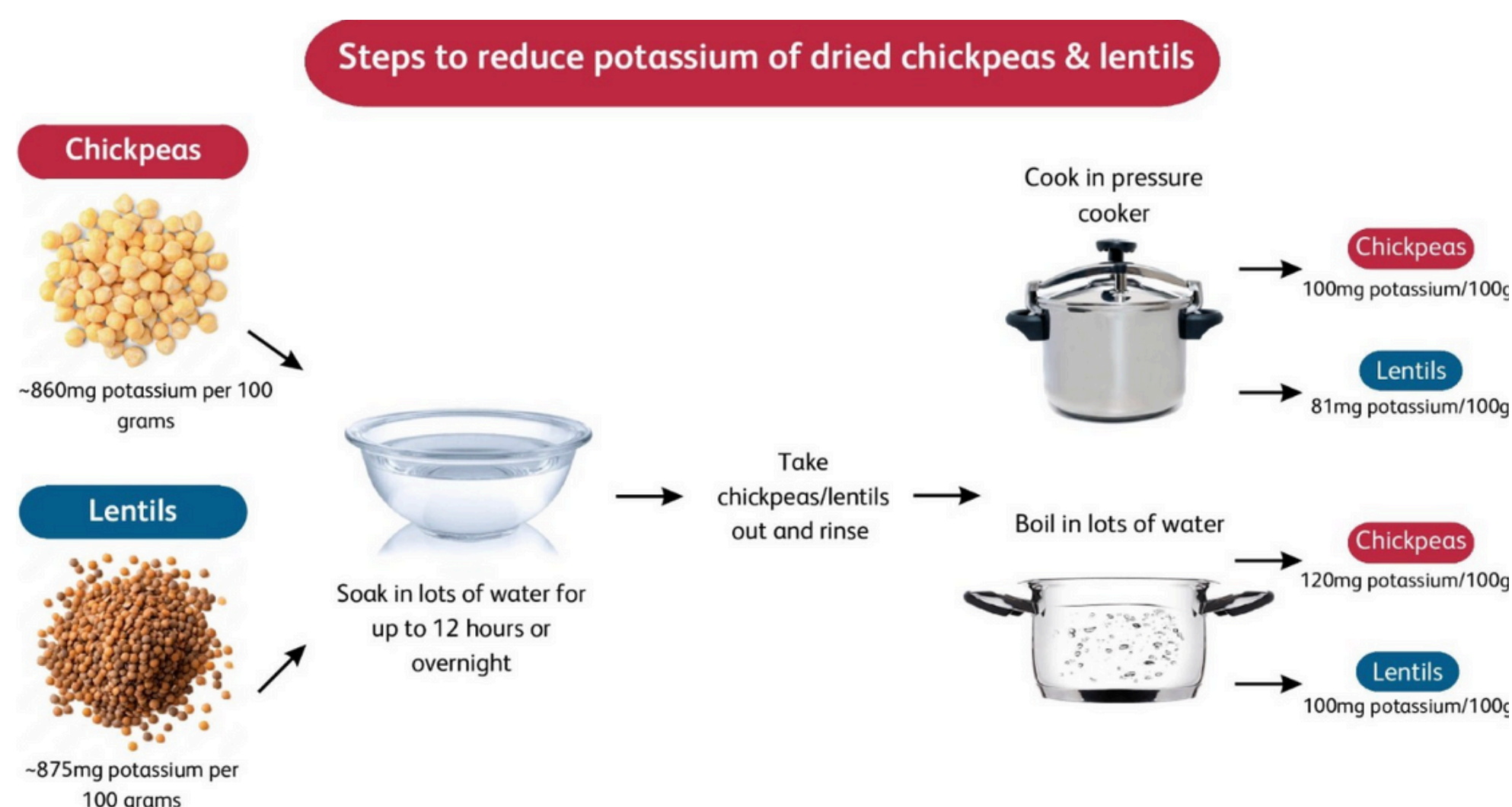
The amount of potassium in plant-based foods varies. For example, tofu and chickpeas are lower in potassium than soybeans and kidney beans.

In the past, patients with hyperkalemia (excess of potassium) were advised against eating legumes. Legumes, in addition to vitamins and fibers, contain a lot of protein and minerals such as potassium. Fortunately, a study in 2019 has found that patients can enjoy legumes if certain preparation steps are taken. This study studied chickpeas and lentils.

Soaking and cooking dried lentils and chickpeas can significantly reduce their potassium. A 100 g portion can be included in a potassium-reduced diet. A food is low in potassium if it provides less than 150-200 mg potassium per 100 g serving size.

Important: When using canned chickpeas or lentils, the initial quantity of potassium is already low. Make sure to choose canned chickpeas and lentils without salt and rinse before using.

Follow the steps listed below when preparing legumes to reduce your potassium intake.



Low Potassium Food Guide

To help you avoid foods that are high in potassium, follow examples suggested in our guide below. Please note that organizations may use different cut-off levels to decide which foods are high or low in potassium. Therefore, you may find some variations among resources.

Note that ½ cup is 1 serving unless otherwise stated.

Our examples below are a guide and should not replace the advice of your HCP.

Speak to your dietitian about the number of servings that is right for you or to identify low-potassium foods that are not captured on this list, including foods from various cultures.

Dairy

Although non-chocolate dairy has less potassium than their chocolate versions, dairy is considered a high potassium food choice. Please limit to ½-1 cup (125-250 ml) per day or as per the recommendation of your Dietitian or Healthcare Team.

Choose:

- Fresh milk
- Pudding
- Ice cream
- Yogurt

Avoid:

- Chocolate milk
- Ice cream and yogurt containing chocolate and/or nuts

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Fruits

Limit to 3 servings per day, or as recommended by your registered dietitian.

Choose (example of 1 serving):

- 1 apple
- Applesauce
- 10 cherries
- ½ mango
- 1 Peach
- 1 Pear, medium
- 1 Plum
- Raspberries
- Strawberries
- Blueberries
- Blackberries
- Pineapple
- Apple juice
- Pineapple juice
- Cranberry juice or cocktail
- Nectars from guavas, peaches, and pears

Avoid:

- Apricots
- Avocados
- Bananas
- Coconut, dried and raw
- Cantaloupes
- Nectarines
- Oranges
- Honeydew melons
- Kiwis
- Papayas
- Coconut, orange, and prune juices
- Coconut water

Do not eat starfruit (also known as carambala, bilimbi, belimbing, Chinese starfruit, star apple) if you have kidney problems.

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Grains

Choose (example of 1 serving):

- Bread, bagels, and rolls made with 60% whole wheat, light rye, or white flour
- Corn or rice-based cereals (Corn Flakes, Rice Krispies, cream of rice, cream of wheat, non-bran cereals)
- White pasta
- White pita
- Crackers (cream, graham, matzo, water, soda)
- White melba toast
- White rice, wild rice
- White rice cakes
- Tortilla chips
- Barley, buckwheat (kasha), bulgur, cornmeal, couscous, white flour

Avoid:

- Bread, bagels, and rolls made with whole grain, 100% whole wheat, or dark rye
- Other cereals (bran, whole grain, granola, shredded wheat, those with dried fruit and nuts)
- Whole wheat pasta
- Brown rice
- Quinoa

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Vegetables

Limit 3 servings per day, or as recommended by your registered dietitian.

Choose (example of 1 serving):

- Onion
- Broccoli, chopped, raw, or frozen
- Beans, green or wax
- Mushrooms, raw
- Carrots, raw (16cm long or 8 baby carrots)
- Carrots, boiled and drained
- Okra, raw or boiled and drained
- Peppers
- 1 cup green peas, frozen, boiled, or canned and drained
- Raw peas
- Asparagus (5 spears)
- 1 celery stalk, raw
- 1 cup of lettuce
- Cauliflower, raw or cooked
- 1 cup cucumber, sliced
- Corn kernels, frozen, canned, or boiled and drained
- Snow peas, raw (10 pods)

Avoid:

- Tomato sauce
- Mushrooms cooked
- Rapini (cooked)
- Bok choy, cooked
- Brussel sprouts, cooked
- Juice- vegetable, clamato, V8 or tomato
- Potatoes (unless prepared according to the cooking instructions listed above or below- place this info where you feel it fits best), Sweet Potatoes



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Additional Items

Choose:

- Coffee or tea
- Butter, margarine, oil, or mayonnaise
- White sugar, sugar substitutes, honey, jam, pancake syrup
- Non-cola beverages
- Herbs and spices, pepper, herb mixes
- Unprocessed meat, fish, poultry, and cheese
- Popcorn, pretzels, corn chips (low sodium options)
- Nut butter, but limited to 1 tbsp per day

Avoid:

- Specialty coffees (cappuccino, Turkish coffee, espresso)
- Canned coconut milk
- Chocolate
- Potato chips
- Nuts and seeds
- Colas
- Brown sugar
- Maple syrup
- Salt-free cheese or processed meats with potassium added
- Salt substitutes containing potassium chlorides (Nu Salt®, No Salt® and Half Salt®)

Avoid foods that list potassium or the chemical symbols (K, KCl or K+) as an ingredient on the label.



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