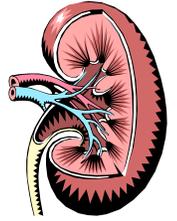


Nutrition after a Kidney Transplant

After your kidney transplant, you may be able to eat foods that were limited before the transplant. A well-balanced diet is important to keep your new kidney healthy. Eating a healthy diet and increasing your activity can lower your risk of heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and osteoporosis.



Here are some tips for staying healthy after your transplant:

Fluid

If your new kidney is working, drink plenty of fluid. You no longer need to limit fluid (unless otherwise specified by your doctor). Dehydration can be harmful to your new kidney. You should aim to drink 2-3 liters of fluid per day.

Protein

In the first 2 months after transplant, you need more protein to heal from surgery and fight infection. Protein-rich foods include:

- Lean meats, poultry, fish
- Low-fat or nonfat milk, yogurt, cheese
- Eggs, egg substitutes (such as Egg Beaters®)
- Beans, peas, nuts
- Tofu, other soy foods



Potassium

Your transplant medications can cause a high potassium level in your blood. Your Doctor or Dietitian may tell you to avoid foods high in potassium based on your lab values. High-potassium foods include:

- Some fruits (e.g. melon, banana, avocado, oranges)
- Some vegetables (e.g. potato, tomato, dark leafy greens)
- Chocolate
- Beans, lentils, nuts, nut butters
- Salt substitutes (try Mrs. Dash® or dried herbs instead)

Sodium

Limit sodium to 2000-2500 mg/day to help control fluid retention and blood pressure. Do not add salt to foods. Avoid high sodium foods such as:

- Salt seasonings (e.g. garlic salt, soy sauce, teriyaki sauce)
- Cured meats (e.g. ham, bacon, sausage)
- Lunch meats (e.g. salami, bologna)
- Frozen meals that have more than 600 mg sodium per serving
- Pickles and olives
- Canned foods with added salt (e.g. canned vegetables and soups)
- Fast food and many restaurant foods



For questions about your diet, call the Transplant Center Dietitian at (916) 734-6528.

Food Safety

Transplant drugs can raise your risk for food-borne illness. You can lower your risk by handling food safely*:

- Avoid raw and undercooked meats, seafood, and eggs. Avoid unpasteurized dairy products.
- Always wash fresh fruits and vegetables with cool, running water before eating.
- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot.
- Avoid well water and bottled water that has not been properly treated.

**Refer to the USDA Food Safety for Transplant Recipients Booklet and the Water Safety Handout for detailed information.*



Food and Drug Interactions

To keep your new kidney healthy, take medications as directed by your Doctor and follow these guidelines:

Mycophenolate Mofetil (MMF):

- MMF may cause diarrhea, constipation, nausea, and vomiting. Try small frequent meals or snacks to better cope with these side effects. It is helpful to take MMF with a small amount of food such as crackers or bread.

Tacrolimus:

- Avoid grapefruit products at all times when taking Tacrolimus.



Long Term Goals: A Healthy Life

Nutrition

A well-balanced diet can help improve your long-term health by lowering your risk of heart disease, diabetes, weight gain, high blood pressure, and osteoporosis. The following information can help you stay healthy after transplant.

- Choose lean meats, poultry, and fish. Trim all visible fat off meat before cooking.
- Choose low-fat or nonfat dairy products.
- Choose high-fiber foods such as whole grains, legumes, fresh fruits, and vegetables.
- Use olive or canola oil in small amounts. Avoid shortening, butter, and stick margarine.
- Bake, roast, broil, boil, or sauté foods instead of frying.
- Limit foods and beverages high in sugar.
- Maintain a healthy weight or lose weight if needed.
- Control your blood sugar and blood pressure to help keep your new kidney healthy.

Exercise

Talk with your Transplant Doctor before you start any physical activity. Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise 5 days per week if approved by your doctor.

After transplant, exercise can:

- help to control your weight.
- strengthen your heart.
- improve your energy.
- keep your bones healthy.

