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## What is Potassium?



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*According to the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, potassium is an underconsumed nutrient, and because there are health concerns associated with low intakes of potassium, it is considered a nutrient of public health concern. Food manufacturers will be required to include potassium content on the new Nutrition Facts label.*

Potassium is a mineral that, among other things, helps muscles contract, helps regulate fluid and mineral balance in and out of body cells, and helps maintain normal blood pressure by limiting the effect of sodium. Potassium also may reduce the risk of recurrent kidney stones and bone loss as we age.

Guidelines issued by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine were recently updated and recommend males 19 and older consume 3,400 milligrams (mg) of potassium per day and females of that same age group consume 2,600 mg daily. Obtaining potassium from foods is preferred, so be sure to discuss dietary supplements with a health care provider before taking any.

Potassium is found in a wide range of foods, such as leafy greens, tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, eggplant, pumpkins, potatoes, carrots and beans. It's also found in dairy products, meat, poultry, fish and nuts.

To meet your daily potassium goal, consider adding some of these foods to your menu on a regular basis:

- 1 medium baked potato with skin: 930 milligrams
- 1 cup cooked spinach: 840 milligrams
- ½ cup raisins: 618 milligrams
- 1 cup cooked broccoli: 460 milligrams
- 1 cup cubed cantaloupe: 430 milligrams
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes: 430 milligrams
- 1 medium banana: 420 milligrams
- 1 cup raw carrot slices: 390 milligrams
- 1 cup low-fat milk: 350 to 380 milligrams
- ½ cup cooked lentils: 365 milligrams
- 1 cup cooked quinoa: 320 milligrams

Including a variety of foods can help you meet your potassium needs for the day, as well as get other important vitamins and minerals that promote health.

Reviewed July 2019 by Sarah Klemm, RD, CD. Published October 2, 2019. To learn more healthy tips, visit [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) and consult a registered dietitian nutritionist. Info obtained from [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org).