

Phosphorus and your kidney health

When you have kidney disease, it's harder for your kidneys to balance phosphorus levels in your blood. If your phosphorus is too high, it can increase your risk of heart disease and bone disease.

Tips for managing phosphorus

Your doctor and/or dietitian will let you know if your phosphorus levels are too high. Use these tips to manage your phosphorus.



Eat fresh foods

Phosphorus is found naturally in fresh foods like dairy products, whole grains, meats, legumes, and nuts/seeds—all healthful choices when eaten in moderation. Talk to your dietitian about the right amount for you.



Read food labels

Phosphorus can be added to foods as a preservative, which can raise your phosphorus levels more than fresh foods. It's important to check the ingredients on the food label for added phosphorus.

Look for ingredients that contain the word “phos”:

Phosphoric acid

Monocalcium
phosphate

Sodium
hexametaphosphate

Examples of foods with phosphate additives:

Fast food

Biscuit, pancake,
and cake mixes

Processed cheese such as
American, Cheez whiz, and
Velveeta

Processed meats such as sausage,
ham, and lunch meat

Dark cola, energy drinks, and bottled
iced tea



Take your phosphorus binders as prescribed

Even with diet changes, you may need to take a prescription medication called a phosphorus binder (also known as a phosphate binder). The binder is taken with meals and snacks to help your body absorb less phosphorus.



Activity

Find the hidden sources of phosphorus in this ingredient list. Pay attention to “enhanced” raw meats too, like chicken breast and pork chops, which also contain hidden phosphates.

Hint: There are 12 hidden phosphate additives.

INGREDIENTS: WATER, SODIUM, TRIPOLYPHOSPHATE, TOMATO PUREE (WATER, TOMATO PASTE), DRIED PEAS, CARROT PUREE, CORN PROTEIN (HYDROLYZED), ENRICHED PASTA (WHEAT FLOUR, TRISODIUM PHOSPHATE, NIACIN, DICALCIUM PHOSPHATE, FERROUS SULPHATE, POLYPHOSPHATE, THIAMINE MONO-NITRATE, RIBOFLAVIN, FOLIC ACID), HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, CONTAINS LESS THAN 2% OF: SALT, REDUCED FAT CHEDDAR CHEESE PASTE (REDUCED FAT CHEDDAR CHEESE [MILK, CULTURES, SALT, SODIUM TRIPOLYPHOSPHATE, ENZYMES], CARRAGEENAN, CITRIC ACID, MONOGLYCERIDES, PHOSPHORIC ACID, WATER, ENZYMES, XANTHAN GUM), BASIL, SPICES, ONION POWDER, PAPRIKA, CARAMEL COLOR, CARROTS, CELERY, CORN, GREEN BEANS, DISODIUM PHOSPHATE, CARROT JUICE CONCENTRATE, VEGETABLE OIL (CORN, TETRASODIUM PYROPHOSPHATE, CANOLA, AND/OR SOYBEAN), MONOSODIUM PHOSPHATE, BETA CAROTENE, SODIUM HEX-AMETAPHOSPHATE, CITRIC ACID, ONION EXTRACT, NATURAL FLAVORING, SODIUM CITRATE, ACETYLATED MONOGLYCERIDES, MALIC ACID, SODIUM TRIPOLYPHOSPHATE, XANTHAN GUM, VITAMIN C (ASCORBIC ACID), LOCUST BEAN GUM, POTASSIUM CITRATE, PHOSPHORIC ACID, NATURAL FLAVOR, COLOR (RED 40, BLUE 1).



We are here to help!

We want you to feel your best. Talk with your doctor or dietitian if you have questions about managing your phosphorus or taking your binders.