

Dietary tips for people with heart and kidney disease

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- Your doctor may have prescribed to you a tablet called a diuretic, or a 'fluid tablet'. Taking this tablet does not mean that you can drink lots of fluid. In fact, it is important that you restrict your total intake of all fluid to less than 1500 mL/day even if you are feeling more thirsty than usual. Your doctor may have suggested that your fluid intake should be even less than this volume. Drinking a lot of fluid can cause ankle swelling or fluid on the lungs.
- Restrict your salt (i.e sodium) intake. Most salt is already in the foods we eat, not what we add to our food at meal times. Eating too much salt causes fluid to be retained and increases blood pressure. Always try to source low salt foods in the supermarket. Examples of foods that contain high levels of sodium are listed below.



PATRICK SHEANDELL OCARROLL/PHOTOALTO/GETTY IMAGES

This handout provides some advice on fluid, sodium and potassium intake for patients who have heart and kidney disease.

Foods that have a high sodium content

Baking powder and soda	Processed meats such as sausages, bacon and ham
Bread	Processed and natural cheeses
Breakfast cereals	Salad dressings
Condensed milk	Salted nuts, popcorn, potato chips, pretzels
Crackers and other savoury biscuits	Silverbeet and spinach
Luncheon meats	Sauces: sweet and sour, soy, Worcestershire and BBQ sauces
Margarine and butter	Takeaway packaged food
Meat and fish pastes	Tinned vegetables and juices
Mineral waters (some types)	Vegemite and Marmite
Monosodium glutamate	
Olives	

Figure. Try to source food that has a low salt content.



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- Avoid 'salt substitutes' as they may contain potassium, and restrict your intake of other foods that contain high levels of potassium. Too much potassium can be dangerous if you have heart or kidney disease, especially if you are taking certain heart or blood pressure medicines. Examples of foods that contain high levels of potassium are listed below.
- Sometimes the kidneys suffer if the heart is not pumping properly. Your family doctor may need the help of both your cardiologist and your kidney specialist to help achieve the correct balance of medications to optimise your blood pressure and pathology results, and to minimise fluid retention.

Foods that have a high potassium content

Avocados	Juices: grapefruit, orange and tomato
Apricots	Kiwi fruit
Baked beans	Nuts
Bananas	Potatoes
Cauliflower	Tomatoes
Cereals	Turnips
Chocolate	Yoghurt
Dried fruits	Salt substitutes (often potassium chloride)



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