What is Potassium?

Potassium is an electrolyte. It helps the body conduct electricity and it commonly works with its fellow electrolytes: sodium, chloride, calcium and magnesium in the transmission of nerve impulses. This is essential for all muscular contractions including the heart, digestive tract and skeletal muscles. Potassium is predominantly found inside the cells only 2% is found outside of them.

Why is Potassium important and what does it do in the body?

Potassium works with the other electrolytes to balance the concentration of sodium in the body. It also stimulates kidney function and provides a balanced pH (acid/alkaline balance). It is important in maintaining sugar (glucose) levels as it helps to stimulate the release of insulin (the hormone that removes excess blood sugar). Potassium plays a vital role in the transmission of nerve signals (electrical impulses) which are vital for every muscular contraction in the body. It can also increase the oxygen supply to the brain and it helps to control calcium levels. Additionally potassium reduces elevated blood pressure and facilitates the stomach lining’s secretion of gastric juices.

What amount of Potassium do you need each day?

Potassium levels may be reduced by the excess sodium contained in modern-day highly processed foods. Consequently, supplementation and/or increasing potassium rich foods may be important. Studies have found that diets high in sodium and low in potassium may play a role in the development of cancer and cardiovascular diseases: heart disease, strokes and hypertension.

The DRI (Daily Recommended Intake) /RDA (Recommended Daily Allowance) of dietary Potassium are listed on the next page:

Please Note: By definition, the DRI/RDA recommendations apply only to 98% of healthy individuals and are not sufficient for those with higher nutrient requirements based upon their biochemical individuality, genetics, health status, medications, deficiencies, lifestyle, and toxic exposures.

The following are daily dietary recommendations from the Institute of Medicine. Adequate intake of potassium from dietary sources are listed on the next page:
Recommended Daily Allowance 2,000mg/Day
Optimal Daily Allowance 2,000mg/Day

Nutrient Deficiency Symptoms and Conditions

What are possible Potassium deficiency conditions and symptoms?

- Acne
- Constipation
- Depression
- Edema (Water Retention)
- Fatigue
- Glucose Intolerance
- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- High Cholesterol
- Irregular/rapid Heart beat
- Muscle aches and cramps
- Muscle weakness, twitching or spasms
- Nausea and vomiting
- Nervousness

What are possible Potassium excess symptoms?

Excessive intake of potassium salts can cause:

- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and ulcers.
- Cardiac arrest

It is better to consume food sources rich in potassium (as listed below) to avoid such side effects.

Levels of serum potassium in excess of 5.5 mEq/l (hyperkalemia) can be life threatening. This is commonly a consequence of decreased potassium excretion or increased extracellular potassium levels and can occur with inappropriate IV therapy, medications or the use of potassium-sparing diuretics. Individuals with kidney disorders should seek advice from their health care practitioner before taking potassium supplementation.

What steals Potassium from the body?

- Stress
- Prolonged vomiting
- Prolonged excessive sweating
- Prolonged diarrhea
- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Excessive sodium intake - excessive consumption of table salt and processed foods
- Analgesic drugs: Aspirin and Salicylates

Diuretic drugs:

- Furosemide (Lasix), Bumetamide (Bumex), Torsemide (Demadex) and Ethacrynic acid (Edecrin)

Anti-inflammatory drugs:

- Corticosteroids - Prednisone (Meticorten), Dexamethasone (Decadron), Methylprednisolone (Medrol)

Gout medications:

- Colchoicine (ColBENEMID), Probenecid (Benemid)

Antacid drugs:

- Aluminum–containing antacids: Gaviscon, Maalox, Mylanta
- Calcium-containing antacids: Mylanta, Rolaids, Tums
- Magnesium-containing antacids: Gaviscon, Maalox and Mylanta) and Alka Seltzer.
- Laxatives: Docusate/Phenolphthalein (Feen-a-Mint) and Bisacodyl (Correctol, Dulcolax)

What tests can be used to assess Potassium levels?

- Red Blood Cell potassium levels
- Potassium levels in serum
- Hair analysis
### TOP 10 POTASSIUM RICH FOODS ARE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Potassium Content (mg/100g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Dried Apricots</td>
<td>1,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Salmon</td>
<td>628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>White beans (Adzuki)</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Chard</td>
<td>558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Spinach</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Baked potato (with skin)</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Avocado</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Squash</td>
<td>437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Kidney beans</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Bananas</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What are the best Potassium products?

Potassium supplements commonly occur as potassium salts either bicarbonate or chloride or chelated forms such as potassium citrate or potassium aspartate.

### REFERENCES

- Potassium | University of Maryland Medical Center [http://umm.edu/health/medical/altmed/supplement/potassium#ixzz36bz7pIN](http://umm.edu/health/medical/altmed/supplement/potassium#ixzz36bz7pIN)
- University of Maryland Medical Center
- Sharon, Michael Dr. Complete Nutrition. 2002
- Laake. Dana Nutrient Chart (not published)
- Groff. Advanced Nutrition and Human Metabolism 5th 2009
- Gibson Principles of Nutritional Assessment 2nd Ed. 2007
- Office of Dietary Supplements, NIH Fact sheets 2010
- Balch. A. Phyllis CNC Prescription for Nutritional Healing 2002

All the statements, including product labels, supporting literature and/or product manufacturers websites have not been evaluated by FDA. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.
What are the very best Potassium products to buy?

**Klaire Amino Acid Complete**
A comprehensive, well-balanced, and hypoallergenic formulation, Amino Acid Complete is designed to meet the needs of individuals who may not be consuming, digesting, or absorbing ... [read more]

**ProThera MultiThera 1**
This versatile, high-potency multiple vitamin and mineral supplement is formulated to be the primary dietary supplement for all types of patients. The amounts and ratios of nutrients are based on many years of clinical experience ... [read more]

**ProThera MultiThera 2**
Iron-fortified multi-nutrient formula. This versatile, high-potency multiple vitamin and mineral supplement is formulated to be the primary dietary supplement for all types of patients. The amounts and ratios of nutrients are based on many years of clinical experience ... [read more]

**ProThera MultiThera 3**
Iron- and copper-free multiple formula. Both iron and copper have been eliminated from this version of MultiThera® to address the needs of patients who may have elevated tissue levels of these minerals. The amounts and ratios of nutrients are identical in all other respects to MultiThera® 1 ... [read more]

**Pure Caps Womens Pure Pack**
Women’s Supplement to Support Bone and Heart Health. Now With Metafolin® L-5-MTHF. Sizes Available 30 packets. Each packet contains 6 different supplements, including ... [read more]

**Pure Caps Mens Pure Pack**
Regardless of your walk of life, all men need to ensure that they get enough of an array of important nutrients. However, who wants to spend their time picking out the right combination of supplements for a daily ... [read more]