

DIET & DIALYSIS: RECOMMENDATIONS

What you eat and drink provides “nutrients” that keep your body working. This chart describes how nutrients from what you eat and drink work in your body.

Nutrient	Function	Food Sources	Recommended for Dialysis
Protein	Building/repair of body tissues, helps prevent/fight infection	Meat, poultry, fish, seafood, tofu, beans, legumes, nuts, nut butters	Slightly higher than for non-dialysis
Calories	Provides fuel for your body, gives you energy	In most all foods, fats are highest source	Eat enough to maintain healthy weight; not usually restricted unless weight loss is necessary
Sodium	Mineral needed for healthy body function/fluid balance	Salt, processed and canned foods, soups	Limit sodium to control thirst and excess fluid build-up
Fluids	Water/fluid is critical to many body functions	Beverages, any food that is liquid at room temperature	Limit salt/fluid for blood pressure control, avoid swelling of tissues (edema) and heart damage
Potassium	Critical to many body functions (nerve, muscle)	Found in almost all foods, highest in fruits/vegetables, some dairy products	Too much or too little can be dangerous; keep blood levels in normal range
Phosphorus	Strong bones/teeth, energy production	In most foods; highest in processed foods, fast foods, and high protein foods	Limit intake to keep blood levels in normal range
Calcium	Strong bones/teeth; critical to muscle and nerve function	Dairy products, calcium-fortified foods	Extra calcium is not usually needed; keep blood levels in normal range