

Potassium-rich Foods

A valuable link to fluid balance in the body.

People who take diuretic medicines to control high blood pressure and fluid retention must be especially careful to eat foods high in potassium because, along with fluid loss, there is also a loss of potassium.

Potassium deficiency

Potassium is linked to fluid balance and muscle activity. Potassium deficiency may produce symptoms of fatigue, weakness and mental depression. When potassium levels are very low, heart irregularities and paralysis can occur.

A diet high in foods which contain potassium usually will be sufficient to prevent a deficiency in potassium resulting from diuretics. Eating fruits and vegetables which are high in potassium can increase potassium intake.

Potassium-rich foods

Potassium-rich fruits include oranges, orange and grapefruit juice, bananas, mel-

People who are using diuretics can minimize potassium deficiencies by carefully selecting foods rich in potassium



ons, nectarines, prunes, peaches, pears, and avocados. Vegetables high in potassium include collard greens, cucumbers, potatoes, sweet potatoes, cabbage, beans, peas, winter squash and tomatoes.

Other good sources of potassium are milk products and meats, including beef, lamb, pork, chicken and fish. Many people who take diuretics are also on low sodium diets. They may need to limit milk intake to two servings daily and limit meat to about 6 ounces daily.

Salt substitutes are made of potassium chloride and provide large amounts of potassium. Potassium chloride isn't recommended for people with some conditions, including kidney disease. Anyone who takes a diuretic should check with a doctor before using salt substitutes.

For more information on potassium-rich foods, contact your local county Extension office.