

Are You Potassium Deficient?

You might be deficient in potassium without even knowing it. Every time you eat sugar or refined carbohydrates, you lose potassium. Sugar is always stored in the body with potassium. So when you eat refined sugar (which is always depleted of potassium unless you consume molasses or brown sugar), your body's reserves get depleted. Compounding this problem, the stress glands (adrenals), when in overdrive, will dump potassium out of the body through the urine. And potassium needs to be in a delicate balance with sodium. This creates lots of water retention within your tissues, because as potassium goes down, sodium goes up.

Potassium is the main mineral that gives your cells their electrical charge. Without this, you become dehydrated inside the cells and water logged outside the cells, as in those creases on you ankles when you take off your socks at bedtime. If you think about the amount of salt we get in our foods, you get the magnitude of this problem – chips, pretzels, popcorn, corn chips, sauces, pre-mixed foods, fast foods, etc. You'll never see potassium on the labels.

People are really fixated on cutting out sodium in the diet and give no attention to the importance of making sure they eat potassium-rich foods. Every time you eat something sweet you force your cells to give up potassium. Every time you go through stress, you force your adrenals to dump potassium. And once potassium is gone, this sugar is not stored anymore as glycogen (stored sugar); it is stored as fat and cholesterol. By having enough potassium, you can balance your stored fats.

Potassium protects your kidneys; it balances out blood sugars, supports red blood cells, helps maintain blood pressure and heart rate, as well as keeping the cells highly electrical.

If a person becomes completely depleted of his or her potassium reserves, these could take up to six months to replenish. There are several key foods that are high in potassium compared to sodium. Believe it or not, bananas don't contain nearly the potassium they did twenty years ago. Below are some high-potassium foods.

HIGH potassium (more than 225 milligrams per 1/2 c. serving)

All meats, poultry and fish are high in potassium.	Milk (Organic)
Apricots (fresh more so than canned)	Oranges and orange juice
Avocado	Potatoes (Organic)
Banana	Prunes
Cantaloupe	Spinach (Organic)
Honeydew Melon	Tomatoes
Kiwi	Vegetable juice
Lima Beans (Organic)	Winter Squash

MODERATE (125 - 225 mg per serving)

These foods can be a large part of most people's balanced nutrition plan.

Apple juice (Organic)	Mushrooms, fresh
Asparagus	Onions
Beets	Peach (Organic)
Blackberries (Organic)	Pears (Organic)
Broccoli	Pineapple
Carrots	Raisins (Organic)
Cherries (Organic)	Raspberries (Organic)
Corn	Strawberries (Organic)
Eggplant	Summer squash, including zucchini
Grapefruit	Tangerines
Green peas	Watermelon
Loose-leaf lettuce	

LOW potassium (less than 125 mg per serving)

These foods give less electrolyte value per serving for people who need to increase their potassium levels.

Apples (Organic)	Cucumber	Mushrooms
Bell peppers (Organic)	Fruit cocktail	Peaches, canned (Organic)
Blueberries	Grapes (Organic)	Pineapple, fresh
Cabbage	Green beans	Plums
Cranberries	Iceberg lettuce	
Cranberry juice	Mandarin oranges, canned	

I don't recommend taking straight potassium supplements because in nature you never see individual minerals; they are always in a complex. One of the best potassium supplements I know of is called SPRINGREEN (360 tablets). It's dried extracted juices of young growing cereal grasses – barely, oats, rye, and wheat. They grow this product on rich soils with no chemicals. You open the bottle and you can smell how fresh it is. It contains all of the important minerals, not just potassium, in their balanced state. If you have any fluid retention, the next morning after taking it you'll notice no more puffiness.