

Aunt Cathy's Guide to



AUNT CATHY

Potassium in Foods

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Potassium is a mineral that has many important roles in the body, including maintaining a regular heart beat. A good intake can also help keep blood pressure where it belongs.

The recommended intake range for most adults is 2000-5600 mg, but many adults have poor intakes (in the lower end of the range or below it.)

Most vitamin/mineral supplements contain little potassium or none at all. In addition, some people take diuretic medications ("water pills") or other **medications that make their bodies lose potassium** as a side effect, and their doctor or pharmacist will advise them that they need to eat even more potassium-rich foods than average or even take a potassium supplement.

On the other hand, **excessive intake of potassium supplements can be harmful.** The amount of potassium found naturally in foods is safe, but in unusual circumstances, (such as certain kidney problems), the doctor may recommend that foods that are high in potassium be limited, too.

The following is a list of some of the richest sources of potassium. It can be useful when trying to increase potassium intake. When potassium must be limited because of a medical condition, however, a Registered Dietitian (RD) should be consulted to help plan a special diet, as this list is not complete enough for that purpose.

Potassium per 1/2 cup

500 mg or more

Potatoes, Bran cereal, Raisins, Avocado, Banana

(It is easy to remember that **potatoes** are the richest food source of **potassium**!)

200-475 mg

Dried beans, Winter squash, Orange juice, Yogurt, Tomato, Celery, Carrots, Watermelon, Broccoli, Milk (any kind), Prunes, Fish, Beef, Lamb, Pork

100-175 mg

Bran flakes, Wheat flakes, Chicken

Other potassium sources:

Brewer's Yeast: 535 mg per oz

Salt substitutes with potassium chloride: 1300-2400 mg per tsp