

What You Need to Know About Potassium

*This article was written and reviewed by dietitians from Dietitians of Canada. Last Update – March 21, 2019*



Potassium is an important mineral that your body needs and is classified as a “get more of” nutrient because of the many important roles that it plays in keeping us healthy. Potassium **regulates the heartbeat, ensures proper function of the muscles and nerves**, and is vital for **synthesizing protein** and **metabolizing carbohydrates**. Potassium is also necessary for the **normal functioning of all cells**. It also helps move nutrients into cells and waste products out of cells. A diet rich in potassium can also helps **to offset some of sodium's harmful effects on blood pressure**.

**How much potassium do I need?**

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Most Canadians can get enough potassium as long as they are making healthy choices based on [Canada’s Food Guide](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php). The amount of potassium you need depends on your age and life stage. Health Canada recommends that individuals 14 years and older should consume 4700 mg of Potassium a day. Use the Nutrition Facts table to compare and choose foods to get 100% DV of this nutrient.

**Which foods have potassium?**

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**Do I need a potassium supplement?**

*No.*Healthy individuals do not need a potassium supplement unless a doctor recommends it. It is best to get the potassium you need from a variety of foods.