



Fluid & nutrition for Kidney Kids

Facts for whānau



Advice in this pamphlet is only intended as a guideline.
Please check with your GP or specialist if you have any
questions relating to your child's condition.

Are fluid and nutritional needs different for tamariki with kidney disease?

Not always. In general, we encourage young people and their whānau to follow a healthy diet in line with New Zealand Healthy Eating Guidelines.

These guidelines set up good habits that will help ensure good outcomes in the future.

When needs are different?

There is no “one size fits all” kidney diet.

Every child with kidney disease is different in terms of diagnosis, kidney function, age, whānau background and culture.

Your child’s doctor or kidney dietitian will advise what’s best for their individual needs.

Kidney function

As kidney function changes, dietary requirements may also change. When the kidneys are not working well, they struggle to remove waste products (toxins) from food.

Some tamariki will need to restrict their intake of minerals such as **salt**, **potassium** and **phosphorus**.

These restrictions may change over time depending on treatments such as medication, dialysis and kidney transplant.

Your dietitian will need to work closely with you and your kidney team as dietary recommendations are affected by many different aspects of your child’s care and treatment.

Potassium

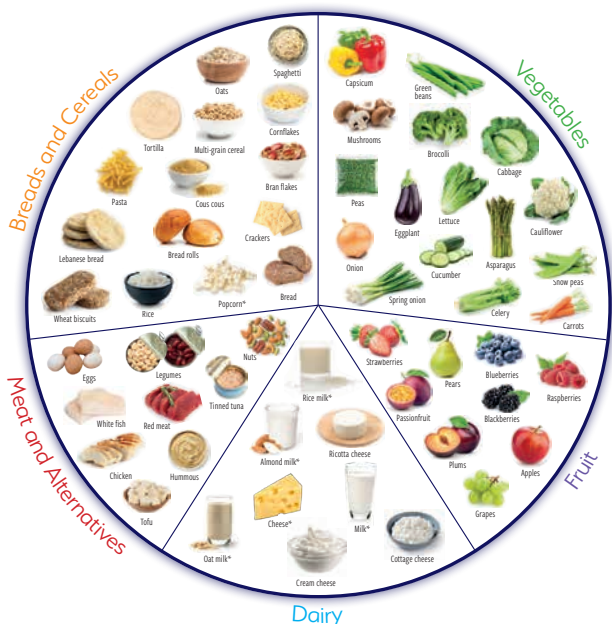


Phosphate



The best nutrition for a Kidney Kid

- Provide a balanced diet with all the foods groups including fruit, vegetables, wholegrain breads and cereal, dairy and meat/fish/chicken/eggs/legumes/nuts. Avoid having too much of one food or one food group only.
- Provide plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables (this is good for kidney and overall health).
- Feed only small amounts of processed foods (packet, crumbed, marinated, pickled), as these often contain excess salt, phosphate and potassium.
- Encourage regular meals/snacks throughout the day.
- Eat together as a whānau where possible. This allows you to role model good eating behaviours to your child and fosters a positive relationship with food.
- Talk to your child's kidney team before using protein powders or any other supplements for body building or training.



Sometimes Foods*



*discuss with your dietitian

Fat



This resource was developed by PRANZ Australian and New Zealand Paediatric Dietitians

Salt

Kidney kids may be advised to have more or less salt, depending on their kidney disease. Specific advice will be given to you by your child's kidney team.



- Some kidney kids are advised to follow a low-salt diet. Too much salt can contribute to high blood pressure. It can make your child want to drink more and it can cause fluid retention (holding too much water inside the body).
- Kidney kids who have nephrotic syndrome that comes and goes (relapse and remission) may be advised to eat less salt when they are in relapse (please refer to the *Nephrotic Syndrome* pamphlet).
- In contrast, some kidney kids may need additional salt to make up for losses from their kidneys to prevent dehydration, low blood pressure or poor growth.

Fluids

Tamariki may be advised to drink more water (fluids) or less, depending on the type and stage of their kidney disease.



- Some kidney kids make too much urine (wee) and need more fluids to keep them well hydrated and improve kidney function. This is particularly important when they are an infant or unwell.
- Other kidney kids make less urine than usual, so will need to drink less to prevent them becoming overloaded with fluid, which can cause swelling and high blood pressure.
- Some kidney kids have difficulty passing urine (peeing) or pass urine very frequently due to bladder issues. These children need to drink water regularly to ensure there is enough urine in the bladder. Keeping the bladder volume up and emptying the bladder when it is full are both important. Known as 'bladder training', this keeps the bladder working normally, helping to maintain kidney function.

Tube feeding

Sometimes kidney kids can't gain enough nutrition with food alone, so require tube feeding.

- **Nasogastric tube** – this tube goes through the nose into the stomach. This is used for short-term tube feeding.
- **Gastrostomy tube (Mic-key or PEG)** – this tube is surgically inserted into the stomach when longer-term tube feeding is required.

Vitamins and supplementation

Kidney kids may need additional vitamin or mineral supplementation. These are specialised products that will be prescribed by your child's dietitian or kidney team.



- Kidneys help to remove excess vitamins in the body, so having kidney failure can lead to vitamin build up which may have side effects. So it's important your child isn't given any vitamin or mineral supplements unless directed by your child's medical team.
- **Vitamin D** deficiency is more common in children with chronic kidney disease, so supplements are common and come in drops. Overuse of vitamin D, however, can lead to kidney stones, so your child's kidney team will recommend what's best for your child.
- **Iron supplements** are also commonly prescribed. Taking it usually results in darker (sometimes black) stools (poos) and can contribute to constipation.



Kidney Kids has plenty of information about conditions that can affect children's kidneys. If you can't find the information you are looking for, please contact us.





Our vision is for all Kidney Kids and their whānau to lead their best lives and to feel supported, understood and connected in a caring community.

Get in touch

If you would like more information about our organisation, or if you, your whānau or friends have a child with a kidney condition and you would like to register with us, please get in touch.

Find us

0800 215 437 – Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm
or email support@kidneykids.org.nz

kidneykids.org.nz

