

COMFORT AND JOY WITHOUT REGRETS!

CÉLINE QUINTIN, P.D.T. ELKE HENNEBERG, EDITOR

The Holiday season should be an enjoyable time for most people. But for those of us with kidney disease, it can be very difficult, considering all of the food and drink temptations available at that time of the year!

For people who are on dialysis, some classic holiday foods can cause serious health damage. A time that should be one of happiness and joy can raise frustrating questions of what to eat and what to avoid.

Here are some tips on making good food choices during the holidays and at the same time, protecting your health.

*We start with some **holiday survival tips**, look at the courses of a typical festive meal, and finally examine some **classic holiday foods** you need to avoid or consume in moderation because of their high phosphorus, potassium, sodium or fluid content.*

Holiday Survival Tips

- Avoid skipping regular meals, which help keep hunger at bay.
- You can eat some foods which are not recommended as long as you keep the portions very small. We call this “controlled cheating!”
REMEMBER: Portion size is the key!
Take your time, eat slowly and enjoy your meals.
- Keep snacks available, especially when you’re away from home.
- Make it yourself! Homemade broths, stuffing, salad dressings and dips allow you to control foods that you need to limit.
- Practice “out of sight, out of mind” by placing tempting holiday foods in the back of the pantry or fridge.
- When you are not certain if some foods you are offered fit into your dietary plan, avoid them or keep portions small.
- Before planning to dine out, have a look at restaurant menus on the internet and if you are in doubt, consult your dietitian. Read our tips in this issue.

How can I stick to my renal diet and still enjoy my favourite foods?

Appetizers

Choose

- vegetables and dips: broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, celery, cucumber, peppers, radishes, zucchini
- deviled eggs
- cream cheese on crackers

Avoid

- black or green olives
- marinades
- guacamole (made with avocados)
- red beets
- mushrooms
- liver paté
- cheeses

Salads

Choose

- green salads
- salads with cabbage, rice, couscous, or pasta

Avoid

- salads with potatoes, tomatoes or legumes
- Asian salads that contain soya sauce

Meats and Main Courses

Choose

- poultry (turkey, chicken, etc.)
- pork
- beef
- veal
- lamb
- seafood prepared with ingredients that are allowed on your plan

Stews, casseroles and meat pies can be consumed in moderation. Ask about the spices and the amount of salt used in preparing these dishes. Try the [winter meat pie recipe](#) on our website: www.myspiceitup.ca

Avoid

- deli meat
- pâtés
- smoked fish
- Chinese food

Sandwiches

Choose

- sandwiches with eggs, chicken, pork or beef

Avoid

- sandwiches with ham, deli meat and cheese

Desserts

Choose

- doughnuts
- vanilla or mocha cake
- muffins
- apple, small fruit or sugar pie
- shortbread or sugar cookies
- fruit salad, watermelon, pineapple, clementines

Avoid

- fruitcake
- date squares
- desserts containing nuts or chocolate
- star fruit (also known as Carambola) because it contains a substance toxic to renal patients.

Snacks

Choose

- popcorn (unsalted or sweet)
- hard candy
- unsalted pretzels
- jelly beans
- vanilla fudge, unsalted corn chips, and unsalted crackers

Avoid

- potato chips
- nuts
- cheese sticks
- salted pretzels

Drinks

Choose (in moderation!)

- wine
- aperitifs
- beer
- spirits (gin, rum, vodka)
- soft drinks or bottled waters that are low in sodium (e.g., Evian™, Perrier™, Vittel™, etc.)

Avoid

- mixed drinks made with orange juice or tomato and Clamato juice
- overindulging

How can I meet my mineral and fluid targets?

Phosphorus

1- Try to limit high-phosphorus foods such as:

- cheese
- baked beans
- macaroni and cheese
- nuts
- eggnog
- ice cream

2- Always have a supply of phosphate binders with you:

- talk to your doctor or renal dietitian about how to manage phosphate binders when you are eating over a longer period of time or more than usual.

Potassium

1- Try to limit high-potassium foods:

- potatoes (sweet or white)
- yam
- squash
- pies (with mincemeat, pumpkin or pecan)
- dried fruit desserts
- chocolate
- nuts
- chips

Sodium

1- Try to limit high-sodium foods:

- ham
- commercial gravy
- commercial dressing
- corned beef

2- Make your own gravy, stuffing and dressing.

3- Raw veggies or fruits and dip are better choices than pretzels and crackers.

4- Eliminate salt from your recipes and replace with other seasonings that are friendly to your diet.

Fluids

1- Be careful not to consume too much liquid.

2- Plan ahead: if you know you will be tempted to drink more at an event, do not drink before or after.

3- Remember that Jell-O™ and gravy are fluids.

4- When eating out, ask the waiters not to refill your glass.