

WATCH OUT FOR PHOSPHATE ADDITIVES!

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Our kidneys perform many important functions, including the removal of any extra phosphorus from the blood. But when kidneys are not functioning well, phosphorus levels can rise, which can lead to serious complications like renal bone disease and calcium deposits in the heart.

So how can you avoid too much phosphorus in your diet? The answer is: by limiting foods that are high in phosphorus and by avoiding foods that contain phosphate additives. But that's easier said than done!

Sometimes it seems as if kidney patients need to be detectives when it comes to reading labels. A quick glance at a Nutrition Facts table gives you an idea of sodium content but won't give you enough information when it comes to phosphorus (or phosphate). Food manufacturers are not required to list the amount of phosphorus in foods on food labels.

Because almost all foods contain some phosphorus, it is impossible to avoid it altogether. Your dietitian will likely recommend that you limit your intake of milk, whole grains, lentils, nuts, seeds, chocolates and foods with phosphate additives.

Phosphate additives are added to foods for many reasons – e.g. as a leavening agent, a preservative, and a flavour or colour enhancer. The phosphates in food additives are especially dangerous since our bodies absorb them much more efficiently than the phosphates that occur naturally in foods like milk, lentils and whole grains.

Many products marketed as “low sodium” are loaded with phosphate additives

Some researchers estimate that phosphate additives can almost double your total intake of phosphorus! To make matters worse, many low sodium products have replaced the salt with phosphate additives.

Unfortunately there is no complete list of all foods containing phosphate additives because there are too many!

Read the labels

On food labels, look for words that include “phosphate” or “phosphoric” such as:

- sodium phosphate
- sodium aluminum phosphate
- sodium tripolyphosphate
- sodium acid pyrophosphate
- monocalcium phosphate
- phosphoric acid

Avoid the following foods because they typically contain phosphate additives:

- Processed cheeses, spreadable cheeses or slices
- Non dairy creamers
- Packaged macaroni and cheese
- Colas
- “Seasoned” meats, poultry and seafood
- Deli meats, bacon
- Bakery products such as biscuits, muffins and snack cakes, frozen pancakes and waffles

Be aware that deli meats may be stocked in the fresh meat counters at your local grocery stores. Insist on getting access to the labels!

Reading labels is the key! Compare products and choose those without phosphate additives. Choose fresh, unprocessed food more often and try low phosphorus recipes like the ones found in **Spice It Up!**

Sometimes dietary modifications aren't enough to keep phosphorus levels in a safe zone, as most of our readers know and have experienced. In this case, your doctor may prescribe phosphate binders. Phosphate binders decrease the absorption of phosphorus from food into the blood.

For more information, visit **Health Canada's food additive info site:** <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/secureit/addit/index-eng.phpg>

Example of a low sodium noodle soup food label

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 0.2 bag
Servings Per Container 8

Amount Per Serving		
Calories 50	Calories from Fat 10	
% Daily Value*		
Total Fat	1 g	1%
Saturated Fat	0 g	
Trans Fat	0 g	
Cholesterol	10 mg	3%
Sodium	95 mg	4%
Total Carbohydrate	9 g	3%
Dietary Fiber	1 g	4%
Sugars	2 g	
Protein	2 g	0%
Vitamin A	0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium	2%	Iron 4%

Ingredients

Enriched Noodles (Durum Flour, Egg Yolks, Niacin, Ferrous Sulfate, Thiamin, Mononitrate, Riboflavin, and Folic Acid) Onions, Potatoes (contains Mono and Diglycerides, and **Sodium Acid Pyrophosphate**) Sugar, Potassium Chloride, Monosodium Glutamate, Vegetable Shortening (Partially Hydrogenated Cottonseed, and Soybean Oil) Garlic, Potassium Citrate, Dill Seed, Turmeric, Celery Seed, Thyme, White Pepper, Parsley.

Example of a non-dairy coffee creamer label



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 tbsp
Servings Per Container 28

Amount Per Serving		
Calories 20	Calories from Fat 10	
% Daily Value*		
Total Fat	1.5 g	2%
Saturated Fat	0 g	
Cholesterol	0 mg	0%
Sodium	10 mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate	2 g	1%
Sugars	1 g	
Protein	0 g	0%

Ingredients

Water, Corn Syrup, Partially Hydrogenated Soybean Oil, Contains Less than 2% of the Following: Mono and Diglycerides, Soy Proteins Isolate, Sodium Stearoyl Lactylate, Polysorbate 60, **Dipotassium Phosphate, Disodium Phosphate**, Artificial flavor, **Sodium Acid Pyrophosphate**, Colored with Beta Carotene.

Example of a Macaroni & Cheese Kraft Dinner® food label



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 0.3 box
Servings Per Container 3

Amount Per Serving		
Calories 260	Calories from Fat 30	
% Daily Value*		
Total Fat	3.5 g	5%
Saturated Fat	2 g	10%
Trans Fat	0 g	
Cholesterol	15 mg	5%
Sodium	580 mg	24%
Total Carbohydrate	48 g	16%
Dietary Fiber	1 g	4%
Sugars	6 g	
Protein	9 g	10%
Vitamin A	0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium	10%	Iron 10%

Ingredients

Enriched Macaroni Product (Wheat Flour, Niacin, Ferrous Sulfate [Iron], Thiamin Hydrochloride [Vitamin B1] Roboflavin [Vitamin B2] Folic Acid) Cheese Sauce Mix (Whey, Milkfat, Milk Protein Concentrate, Salt, **Sodium Tripolyphosphate**, contains Less than 2% of Citric Acid, Lactic Acid, **Sodium Phosphate, Calcium Phosphate**, Milk, Yellow 5, Yellow 6, Enzymes, Cheese Culture)