

Healthier Bites For Your Kidneys!

VA Nutrition & Food Services Renal Nutrition Toolkit

Recipes for Veterans with Chronic Kidney Disease



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration

www.nutrition.va.gov

Summer is **f-i-n-a-l-l-y** here! People with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) benefit from plant dominant meals, adjusted according to their labs. The Mediterranean approach is a starting point for early CKD patients. Eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grains than the standard American meals, and fewer meats, sweets, and sodium is beneficial for kidney care. Visit your local farmer’s market this summer to find an inspiring variety of fruits and vegetables!

An easy approach is to:

- * add extra vegetables, whole grains, and fruit;
- * limit processed foods and meat;
- * use extra virgin olive oil;
- * Eat locally to support your local economy, your local farmers, and your health!

We invite you to enjoy these easy, delicious recipes. Thank you to the Veterans and their families who are committed to finding wellness while living with chronic kidney disease.

Recipes and Articles in this Issue

-  *Mediterranean Stuffed Peppers* 3
-  *Quinoa With Vegetables* 4
-  *Corn Salad* 5
-  *Watermelon Salad*..... 6
-  *Very Berry Cobbler*.....7
- Farmers Market/Seasonal Produce*..... 8
- Spotlight! Peppers* 9
- Reduce Risk With Authentic Mediterranean Meals*..... 10

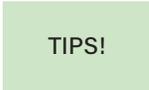
Recognize Cues and Symbols in this Issue!



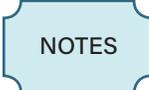
RECIPE



EDUCATION



TIPS!



NOTES

About this issue: Healthier Bites for Your Kidneys is published by the Department of Veterans Affairs and does not replace the advice of your healthcare team. Each recipe has been reviewed by Registered Dietitians, and nutrient content verified using the USDA Nutrient Data Lab. Due to the broad range of medical conditions, no single diet or recipe is ideal for all people. Please consult your own Registered Dietitian for guidance on your unique nutrient needs.



Mediterranean Stuffed Peppers



Ingredients

4 bell peppers, halved with seeds removed
2 cups cooked brown rice
2 teaspoons dried onion bits
1 teaspoon minced garlic
2 teaspoons dried oregano
½ teaspoon smoked paprika
½ teaspoon ground allspice
¼ cup no salt added tomato sauce
½ cup flat leaf parsley, chopped
1 cup no salt added canned chickpeas, rinsed and drained*
½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
2 tablespoons sun-dried tomatoes, drained and chopped
2 tablespoons lemon juice
¼ cup chopped walnuts
Dash of pepper
Salt is not included, use according to your doctor's advice

Serves 4

Serving Size: 1 pepper

Preparation Time: 20 minutes Cooking Time: 55 minutes

Total Time: 1 hr. 15 minutes

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray the bottom of a 9 x 13 baking dish with cooking spray. Place the peppers in the pan cut-side up.

In a large bowl combine rice and remaining ingredients. Spoon the filling into the peppers, add any remaining filling around the peppers. Cover pan with foil and bake 45 minutes. Remove the foil and bake another 10 to 15 minutes. Serve immediately.

Notes: Meat is not included; if desired, add a small amount of cooked ground turkey, chicken or plant-based crumbles.

**Most early stage CKD patients do not require potassium reduction. If your labs require potassium restriction, reduce the chickpeas to ½ cup.*

Nutrition Facts Per Serving contains: calories: 274 | carbohydrates: 52 g | fat: 7 g | sodium: 21 mg | potassium: 530 mg | phosphate: 191 mg | fiber: 8 g | Phosphorus: 191 mg



Quinoa With Vegetables



Ingredients

1 tablespoon olive oil
½ cup sweet onion, diced
2 small zucchini, diced (2-3 cups)
1 ear of corn cooked on the grill, or charred over gas flame (or substitute one 15 ounce can No Salt Added corn, or 1 ½ cups frozen corn, thawed)
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 ½ cups of hot water
1 cup quinoa, well rinsed
½ cup salsa
½ teaspoon smoked paprika
Dash of Aleppo flaked red pepper (optional)
Salt is not included, use according to your doctor's advice

Serves 4

Serving Size: 1 Cup

This versatile recipe is easily prepared for use as a side dish, wrap or salad. Rinse quinoa in a fine mesh strainer under running water before cooking it to remove the bitter outer coating on the seeds, or buy prewashed quinoa.

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 40 minutes

Total Time: 60 minutes

Directions

Preheat oven to 400 F

In a small Dutch oven or oven proof 10" lidded skillet, heat oil over medium heat, add onion and zucchini and cook until tender – about 4 minutes; add corn and garlic.

Add hot water, quinoa, salsa, paprika. Stir once.

Cover with lid; bake for 40 minutes.

Remove from oven and let the dish rest covered for 10 minutes to absorb liquid.

Serve warm, garnish with Aleppo flaked red pepper or more salsa if desired.

* Quinoa ("keen-wah") is often referred to as a grain, but it is actually a seed that becomes light and fluffy when cooked. Unlike other whole grains, quinoa contains all nine essential amino acids, making it a complete protein and good source of fiber and vitamins.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 243 kcal | Protein: 8 g | Carbohydrate: 38 g | Dietary Fiber: 8 g | Total Fat: 3 g | Sodium: 56 mg | Potassium: 421 mg | Phosphate: 199 mg |



Corn Salad



Ingredients

3 cups of fresh corn kernels
(may use frozen or No Salt
Added canned corn)

1 tablespoon extra-virgin
olive oil

½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved

⅓ cup fresh basil, thinly sliced

1 tablespoon green onion
minced

1 tablespoon cider vinegar

¼ teaspoon kosher salt or less,
according to your doctor's
directions

¼ teaspoon ground pepper or
to taste

Serves 4:

Serving Size: ½ Cup

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 20 minutes

Directions

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Line baking sheet with foil, spray with cooking spray.

Combine corn and oil, spread on to baking sheet.

Bake for 20 minutes, stirring once. Corn kernels will begin to brown.

Remove corn from oven.

Combine basil, green onion, vinegar, cherry tomatoes, salt (if used) and pepper with the corn kernels.

Serve warm or cold.

This versatile salad is delicious with a variety of summer vegetables, such as red or green peppers, mild chilies, grilled zucchini, or grilled asparagus. Plan ahead by grilling extra corn at a previous meal to save for this salad!

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 102 kcal | Protein: 3 g | Carbohydrate: 16 g | Dietary Fiber: 7 g
| Total Fat: 5 g | Sodium: 133 mg | Potassium: 225 mg | Phosphate: 16 mg |



Watermelon Salad



Ingredients

- 1 cup watermelon cut into 1 inch cubes*
- 1 cup cucumber peeled and sliced*
- ½ cup red radish sliced thinly*
- 1 tablespoon olive oil*
- 2 teaspoons white balsamic vinegar or lime juice*
- Dash black pepper (optional)*
- Mint leaves (optional)*

Serves 4: Serving Size: 1 Cup

Preparation Time: 20 minutes Total Time: 20 minutes

Directions

Place watermelon and cucumber in a large bowl.

In a small bowl combine olive oil, vinegar (or juice), and pepper if used.

Pour olive oil mixture over fruit mixture, stir gently.

Garnish with mint leaf if desired.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 47 kcal | Protein: 1 g | Carbohydrate: 5 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Total Fat: 3 g | Sodium: 13 mg | Potassium: 142 mg | Phosphate: 16 mg |



Very Berry Cobbler



Ingredients

3 to 4 cups berries or other fruit
¼ cup sugar or equivalent sugar substitute
1 teaspoon lemon zest

Batter

6 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
1 cup flour
¾ cup sugar or equivalent sugar substitute
2 teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon vanilla
¾ cup milk (cow's milk, almond milk or other plant milk)

Serves 8

Serving Size: ½ Cup

Delicious summer fruit cobblers are easier than pie, and adaptable to a variety of summer fruit. Cobblers or other regional variations are a time tested delicious way to use plentiful summer fruit.

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 40 minutes

Total Time: 55 minutes

Directions

Adjust oven rack to middle position and preheat oven to 350 F.

Put butter in a deep dish pie pan, or 9 x 13 inch pan, place in oven to melt as the oven preheats and remove the pan from the oven when the butter has melted.

In a small bowl combine blueberries, sugar and lemon zest.

In a medium bowl combine the batter ingredients: flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Stir in milk until combined. Add cinnamon and vanilla.

Pour the blueberries over the melted butter in the baking dish. Top with the batter. Sprinkle with sugar or cinnamon if desired.

Bake for 40-50 minutes or until the top is golden brown and batter is fully cooked in the middle.

Serve with whipped topping, ice cream, or non-dairy "ice cream".

Note: If using frozen berries, thaw the berries before baking, or increase the baking time.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 287 kcal | Protein: 2 g | Carbohydrate: 45 g | Dietary Fiber: 2 g | Total Fat: 8 g | Sodium: 13 mg | Potassium: 182 mg | Phosphate: 16 mg |

Farmers Market/ Seasonal Produce



EDUCATION

Find fresh summer flavor at your farmers market!



Benefits of shopping at farmers markets include:

Fresh healthy choices: Fruits and vegetables are picked at the peak of freshness, for the best flavor and nutrition. Local harvesting brings produce from the field to you with less handling and spoilage.

Variety: Your local farmers market favors small farms that grow varieties not available at the local grocery store. Try purple broccoli, heirloom varieties of tomatoes, or tender seasonal greens!

Seasonal flavor: Find the best flavors of the season where you live. Enjoy summer fruits and vegetables during your local growing season for amazing flavor. Check out The Seasonal Food Guide to discover what is in season in your area (<https://www.seasonalfoodguide.org>).

Economical: Shopping locally puts money you're your own community and local farms. Farmers market vendors set prices that cover their costs. Prices vary, but are usually less expensive at the farmers market than at grocery stores.

Find the Welcome Booth when you arrive at the farmers market and look for special programs. SNAP benefits often provide double your money if you shop at farmers markets.

If shopping time is limited, consider enrolling in a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm subscription through your local grocery store. Each week the CSA provides a box of just picked produce, grains, or eggs from local farms. Find a local CSA near you: <https://www.localharvest.org/csa/>.

Community: When you buy locally, you know where your food comes from. The farmers market brings communities together and offers a healthy choice for you and the environment.

Spotlight! Peppers

Peppers are a nutritional powerhouse enjoyed at meals around the world! They are an excellent source of vitamin C, and naturally improve absorption of iron. As Bell Peppers ripen they change color from green to a yellow, orange, red or purple. Their amazing colors are due to the unique nutrients and antioxidants which lowers risk of chronic diseases. Chili peppers contain capsaicin for spicy salt-free flavor. Enjoy "eating a rainbow" of peppers!

Pepper Purchasing Tips:

- ★ Select firm peppers, with intact stems and no spots.
- ★ Green peppers may ripen a little if left at room temperature two days.
- ★ Store unwashed in the vegetable section of the refrigerator. Keep them hydrated by adding a damp paper towel. Do not cut out the stem until ready to use.
- ★ Peppers keep up to 7 days in the refrigerator and may be frozen whole for future use.

Pepper Preparation Tips:

- ★ Enjoy the versatile vegetable raw or cooked. Add peppers to dips, salads, stir fry, or pasta.
- ★ Roast peppers are easily prepared in the oven, or by grilling or broiling for use in recipes. Place in a bag or bowl with a lid for 15 minutes, then remove the peel.
- ★ If working with hot peppers, avoid irritating your skin by wearing gloves as you peel off the skin and remove the stem, membrane and seeds.
- ★ Stock up on peppers! Bell peppers retain their nutrients very well when frozen.
- ★ Enjoy seasoning your food with special peppers. Paprika, made from ripened dried peppers, adds sweet or smoked flavor. Pimento peppers are a mild type of chili pepper.



Thought for the day: "Love yourself enough to live a healthy lifestyle."

- Jules Robson

Reduce Risk With Authentic Mediterranean Meals

Authentic Mediterranean meals reduce the risk of progression of chronic kidney disease 47%¹. Try these tips to begin preparing Mediterranean meals using wholesome foods:



- Add extra vegetables in a variety of colors - greens, broccoli, cauliflower, onions, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers..



- Use more beans and lentils, less meat.



- Use whole grains such as whole oats, brown rice, barley, whole wheat, rye, quinoa, corn and buckwheat.



- Select sweet treats of fruit rather than sugar.
- Snack on a handful of nuts, or small cup of low/no fat yogurt.
- Season with herbs and spices instead of salt.
- Use small amounts of Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO), limit animal fat.

Mediterranean meals traditionally use Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO). The healthiest olives grow in areas that naturally produce olives with greater polyphenol content. Choose high quality EVOO by using one or more of these tips:

- ★ compare the harvest date and the expiration date – use within a year of the harvest date.
- ★ choose olive oil in a container that keeps out light – dark glass or cans are ideal.
- ★ choose extra virgin olive oil rather than virgin, refined or blended oil.
- ★ Sometimes the variety of olive is identified, for easier selection of higher polyphenol content.

Olives in order of most to least polyphenols are:

Very High	High	Medium	Low
Coratina Koroneiki	Bosana Manzanillo	Arbosana Frantoio	arbequina Taggiasaca
Conicabra Moraiolo Picual	Chemlali Picholine	Barnea Hojiblanca Empeltre Leccion	Picudo

The traditional Mediterranean lifestyle balances physical, mental and spiritual needs for a healthy approach to include time to enjoy meals, regular physical activity, and safe social activity.

Resource: Oldways Cultural Food Traditions, see Mediterranean resources at <https://oldwayspt.org>

¹ Khatri M, et.al. The association between a Mediterranean-style diet and kidney function in the Northern Manhattan Study Cohort. Clin J Am Soc Nephrol. 2014.



Nutrition Label Quick Guide

Your tool for kidney protection.

Portion size - Does the amount you eat match this serving size? If not, your nutrient intake will be different than the amount shown on the label.

Sodium: Look at the "mg" not the "%DV". Aim for less than 2300 mg sodium per day, or according to your doctor's advices;
 Less than 700 mg per meal;
 Less than 140 mg per single serving of one food.

Carbohydrates: Carbohydrates include fiber as well as added sugar and starch. Healthy meals include higher fiber foods, such as vegetables and whole grains, and limit added sugar and high fructose corn syrup. If you have diabetes eat a similar amount of carbohydrate at each meal to keep blood sugar stable.

Potassium: Potassium may be listed as percent daily value and is based on the RDA of 4700 mg/d. Low potassium foods have less than 200 mg while very high potassium foods are greater than 300 mg per serving. Ask your dietitian or renal doctor what are your potassium needs.

Phosphate: A listing is not required even if the food contains phosphorus. Phosphorus food additives should be avoided. Identify this type of food additive in the ingredient list. The name contains "**phos**".
 If phosphorus is listed, avoid foods with over 15% of DV (150 mg).

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
Serving size 1 1/2 cup (208g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	240
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 4g	5%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 430mg	19%
Total Carbohydrate 46g	17%
Dietary Fiber 7g	25%
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 2g Added Sugars	4%
Protein 11g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 6mg	35%
Potassium 240mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Ingredients: whole wheat pasta; sauce pasteurized milk, processed cheese, olive oil, butter, salt, sugar, corn, green beans, potatoes, sodium benzoate, sodium tripolyphosphate, BHA, BHT