

# Healthier Bites For Your Kidneys!

VA Nutrition & Food Services  
Renal Nutrition Toolkit

Recipes for Veterans with Chronic Kidney Disease



*Recipe pg. 4*

**VA**



[www.nutrition.va.gov](http://www.nutrition.va.gov)

## Recipes and Articles in this Issue

We are pleased to introduce the first issue of Healthier Bites for Your Kidneys! This unique series focuses on kidney friendly recipes and nutrition information for Veterans with early chronic kidney disease who are not on dialysis. Chronic kidney disease affects 37 million Americans and may also require nutrition care for other chronic diseases such as diabetes or heart disease. Wholesome meals use a “plant dominant” approach to focus on healthy food choices and reduce meat and processed foods to prolong kidney function.

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.

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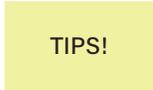
### Recognize Cues and Symbols in this Issue!



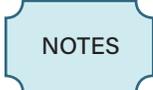
RECIPE



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.



# Busy Day Sandwich



## Ingredients

- 1 15 ounce can No Salt Added or Low Sodium Garbanzo/chickpeas, rinsed, drained, pat dry
- ¼ cup finely diced onion
- ¼ cup finely diced celery (about 1 stalk)
- ¼ cup finely diced red or orange bell pepper
- 3 Tablespoons light mayonnaise or salad dressing
- 2 Tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon dried dill weed, or 1 Tablespoon fresh dill weed
- 1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon sweet pickle relish
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika
- Dash of black pepper
- Buns or bread slices for 4 sandwiches

Serves 4

*This "busy day" sandwich filling is an easy, healthy substitute for a fast food sandwich. You may adapt the vegetables and seasonings to use what you have on hand.*

## Directions

Rinse garbanzo beans, pat dry with a paper towel, chop coarsely.

Add the chopped garbanzo beans to a mixing bowl followed by all remaining ingredients.

Mix well. If the mixture seems dry, adjust the moisture by adding a little more vinegar or mayonnaise.

Build your sandwich using your favorite toasted bread or bun, with toppings such as lettuce, sliced peppers, hot sauce or tomato slices.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 1 serving of filling (without the bun/bread) contains: calories: 193 | carbohydrates: 27 g | fat: 5 g | sodium: 280 mg | potassium: 257 mg | phosphate: 120 mg | fiber: 8 g |



# Arugula Pesto



## Ingredients

*¾ cup unsalted walnuts*  
*3 cups arugula*  
*2 cloves garlic*  
*½ cup lemon juice*  
*½ - ¾ cup olive oil*  
*¼ teaspoon salt*

*Serves 5*

*Arugula, or rocket as it is sometimes called, is an early spring green that is often available in the produce section of the grocery store. Its peppery flavor is perfect for making pesto, a delicious nutrient-packed sauce to enjoy in a variety of dishes.*

## Directions

Place ingredients in food processor or blender. Blend until smooth. Add a splash of water to make it smoother.

## Delicious ways to enjoy Arugula Pesto:

- ★ Salad dressing – toss lettuce and greens with pesto, add a squeeze of lemon juice, cherry tomatoes, grated parmesan, and cracked black pepper.
- ★ Pasta sauce – toss arugula pesto with your favorite cooked pasta. Top with Parmesan cheese.
- ★ Drizzle over grilled or baked fish to add color and flavor.
- ★ Liven up your breakfast egg by sliding it on to a crusty piece of toast drizzled with pesto.
- ★ Add pesto to sour cream or Greek plain yogurt for a healthy dip.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 280 kcal | Protein: 3g | Carbohydrate: 4 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Total Fat: 30 g | Sodium: 120 mg | Potassium: 160 mg | Phosphate: 347mg |



# Tomato and Asparagus Carbonara



## Ingredients

3 quarts water  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 pound asparagus, cut into 1 inch pieces  
1 tablespoon minced garlic  
1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, halved  
2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese, plus additional 1 tablespoon if desired  
½ teaspoon ground black pepper  
1 large egg  
8 ounces pasta of choice (For this recipe, rotini chickpea pasta was used.)  
2 tablespoons fresh chopped basil

Serves 4

Spring is an ideal time to try new products appearing in your local market, including asparagus.

## Directions

Bring water to in a large pot.

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add asparagus and saute for 3-4 minutes, then add garlic and saute for another 1 minute. Add tomatoes and cook for 5-6 minutes or until tomatoes are tender.

Cook pasta until al dente according to package instructions.

Whisk together 2 tablespoons of cheese, pepper, and egg in a bowl.

When pasta is done, reserve approximately ½ cup of water and then drain pasta in a colander. Immediately place pasta back in pot and add egg mixture. Stir, then add asparagus/tomato mixture and ½ cup of reserved pasta water. The hot pasta and vegetables will cook the egg. If sauce is thin, heat over low heat for 1-2 minutes while gently stirring or tossing the pasta.

Divide among 4 bowls and garnish with basil (and remaining 1 tablespoon of parmesan cheese, if desired).

*Substitute: If using standard instead of chickpea pasta, calories for each serving will remain approximately the same; standard pasta increases carbohydrate by 10 g, and decreases fiber by 2 g, protein by 5 g, and potassium by 400 mg.*

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 426 kcal | Protein: 20g | Carbohydrate: 45 g | Dietary Fiber: 10 g | Total Fat: 3 g | Sodium: 125 mg | Potassium: 1134 mg | Phosphate: 347mg |



# Adobo Zucchini Salad



## Ingredients

1 medium zucchini  
¼ cup red onion, diced  
1 ½ tablespoons finely chopped chipotle chiles in adobo sauce, divided  
(often found in the Hispanic section of your grocery store)  
1 tablespoon 100% lime juice  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
1 (14 oz) can unsalted chickpeas, drained and rinsed  
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved  
¼ cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt  
¼ cup unsalted roasted pepitas (shelled pumpkin seeds)  
¼ - ½ teaspoon black pepper, divided

Serves 4

## Directions

Using a vegetable peeler, peel thin strips from zucchini, approximately 1 ½ cups. Reserve remaining zucchini for another use. Combine zucchini strips, red onion, and 2 teaspoons of chiles and adobo sauce in a bowl and let sit at room temperature for 10 minutes.

Prepare dressing by whisking together lime juice and remaining chiles in a small bowl. Gradually add 3 tablespoons of olive oil.

Toss together lettuce, chickpeas, tomatoes, black pepper, and dressing.

Divide among 4 bowls. Top with ¼ of the zucchini mixture, Greek yogurt, and pumpkin seeds.

*Note: After touching chile peppers, wash hands to prevent potential skin or eye irritation if contact occurs.*

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 395 kcal | Protein: 14g | Carbohydrate: 34 g | Dietary Fiber: 10 g | Total Fat: 24 g | Sodium: 337 mg | Potassium: 644 mg | Phosphate: 125mg |



# Confetti Stir Fried Rice



## Ingredients

4 ½ teaspoons of olive oil;  
divided

2 eggs, whisked together

½ small onion, finely diced

1 cup red, orange and/or  
yellow pepper, diced

½ cup of kale or spinach, thinly  
sliced

½ cup frozen green peas,  
(no need to thaw)

2 cloves of garlic, minced

2 teaspoons of grated or  
minced fresh or frozen ginger

1 tablespoon of reduced  
sodium tamari sauce instead of  
soy sauce

2 cups cooked brown rice  
(\*see notes)

Serves 2

*This recipe is easily cooked, so gather all of your ingredients first, including a bowl or platter to hold the cooked eggs and veggies.*

## Directions

Warm a large skillet over medium heat until a drop of water sizzles. Add 1 ½ teaspoons of oil to the pan. Add the eggs, lightly stir until just set, then remove them to the bowl.

Wipe out the pan and return it to heat. Add 1 ½ teaspoons of oil and cook the onions and peppers until tender, about 3 minutes. Add them to the bowl containing the eggs.

Wipe out the pan and return it to heat. Add 1 ½ teaspoons of oil and warm the ginger and garlic about 30 seconds; add the rice, stir about 3 minutes until hot and golden on the edges.

Add the greens; add the veggies and eggs, breaking up the eggs into small pieces; add the tamari or soy sauce.

Divide into bowls and serve immediately.

*\* If you want to try cooking regular brown rice for more fiber, instead of instant brown rice: Bring a large pot of water to boil, using at least 6 cups of water. Rinse one cup of rice in a mesh strainer. Add the rice to the boiling water, reduce heat to maintain the boiling without boiling over. Boil 30 minutes, uncovered. Drain off water, return rice to the pot and put the lid on to let the rice steam for 10 minutes. Then fluff with a fork for use. Yield = 4 cups of cooked rice.*

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 450 kcal | Protein: 17g | Carbohydrate: 60 g | Dietary Fiber: 9 g | Total Fat: 30 g | Sodium: 120 mg | Potassium: 160 mg | Phosphate: 347mg |

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# Be Mindful for Kidney Care



Your food choices are part of your chronic kidney disease treatment. Your kidneys work hard to remove the waste that builds up in your blood from digestion. Choosing wholesome foods provides helpful nutrients and lowers the amount of additives your kidneys must filter. Those daily choices are a tool for kidney protection that you control. Your Registered Dietitian can advise you on specific foods to add or limit to enhance your nutrition. As you begin choosing healthier foods you will become more aware of how those foods make you feel.

*Here are a few self-checks to guide your mindful choices:*



Enjoy the appearance of your meal. Notice the colors, smells, tastes and textures of the food. How do you feel after eating the food? Include your own preference for expressions of gratitude or thankfulness for the food as you reduce stress and enjoy a relaxing meal.



Take time for healthy meals and snacks. Reduce skipping meals so to lessen the temptation to make fast, unhealthy food choices due to extreme hunger.



Check the proportion of your kidney friendly meal: Do vegetables take up more space on your plate than meat? Is a fruit included? Is a wholesome whole grain starch included in the right serving size?



Are you staying hydrated with water?



Limit processed foods – the foods which have had good nutrients removed and/or harmful ingredients added.

Your unique nutritional needs are based on your labs and medical issues.

# Spotlight!

## The Benefits of Blueberries



While berries of all types are among the healthiest of foods whether fresh or frozen, blueberries are a fantastic source of antioxidants to reduce inflammation. They are studied for their potential to protect against many forms of chronic disease. Try them fresh, or frozen on cereal. They are a delicious sweet treat topped with a spoonful of almond or coconut yogurt!

Try them fresh or frozen.

Try blueberries:

- ★ On cereal
- ★ On top almond or coconut yogurt
- ★ As a delicious dessert
- ★ A snack with a small handful of unsalted nuts
- ★ On top oatmeal or other hot cereal

*"Healthy habits are learned the same way as unhealthy ones – through practice."*

*Dr Wayne W. Dyer*

# 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).

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

\* 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