

Hyperkalemia (High Potassium)

What is Hyperkalemia?

Hyperkalemia is a medical condition where potassium levels in the blood are too high. Potassium is important for your body's cells including those in your heart. However, when there is too much potassium and it is not managed properly, it can have bad effects.

Signs and Symptoms

Patients with high potassium typically show few or no symptoms. Your health care team will be monitoring you for this with blood work.

What Causes Hyperkalemia?

- **Diet:** Having too much potassium in your diet can contribute to hyperkalemia, especially if it is paired with one of the causes listed below.
- **Kidney Disease:** Your kidneys filter our blood and keep potassium levels balanced. When they malfunction, they may not be able to remove potassium as well.
- **Medications:** Some drugs effect how the kidneys handle potassium and can increase potassium levels in the blood. Your team is always balancing the benefit of medicines you are taking with risks of side effects.

How to manage Hyperkalemia

- **Dietary changes:** Ask your healthcare provider or dietitian to recommend foods that you should limit or avoid if your potassium is high.
 - Please see the additional resources section for some supporting information
- **Avoid salt substitutes:** Many low sodium foods contain potassium. It is important to read the nutrition labels if you are unsure.
- **Medications to lower potassium**
 - There are medications that can help with management of high potassium if diet changes are not enough or your potassium is very high
 - Adjusting your heart medications with your heart failure team

Make sure to talk to your healthcare provider to see what the best management plan is for you.

Additional Resources

For more information, here are some additional links.

- [Diet Information](#)
- [Potassium Information](#) (Heart and Stroke)

