Plant-Based Eating for Chronic Kidney Disease

Benefits of Plant-Based Meals

Plant-based meals are made up of mostly plant foods and limit meat, egg, and dairy products. Plant-based meals are safe for people with CKD and can provide the nutrients to support kidney function at any stage. Speak with your Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) about how you can include more plant-based meals in your diet! Some benefits include:

- **Blood Sugar Control:** Plant-based diets are high in fiber, which can help improve blood sugar.

- **Heart Health:** A diet low in animal protein and high in plant protein may lower blood pressure. It can also improve cholesterol levels.

- **Bowel Regularity:** Plant-based diets include a variety of fiber-rich foods. Eating enough fiber helps with digestion.

- **Weight:** Diets high in fiber and lower in calories, like plant-based diets, are linked to a healthy weight.

Aim to eat at least two plant-based meals per week, your body will thank you!

Potassium

Potassium is a mineral found in many foods. How much you should eat is based on your blood level and CKD stage. Speak with your RDN to find out how much you need and which sources are best for you. Refer to the *Lower & Higher Potassium Fruits and Vegetables Guide*.

Protein

A plant-based diet can provide all the protein your body needs. The amount depends on your stage of CKD. Talk with your RDN about how much is right for you and which sources to choose. Refer to the *Meat-Free Protein Guide* for plant sources to try.

Phosphorus

Phosphorus is also a mineral found in many foods. Your body absorbs less phosphorus from plant foods than from animal-based foods. Take phosphate binders with meals if your doctor has prescribed these medications. Speak to your RDN about phosphorus and plant-based diets.

Sodium

Fresh foods have less sodium than processed foods. If you choose packaged foods, try low-sodium versions. Rinse canned items. Limit salted foods and those with sauces. Read nutrition facts labels and aim for 200 mg of sodium or less per serving.
Tofu Stir-Fry

Serving Size: 1½ cups stir fry + ½ cup rice
Portions: 4

Ingredients

- 2 minced garlic cloves
- ¼ cup diced onion
- 1 Tbsp. fresh ginger, minced (optional)
- ½ cup broccoli florets (can be frozen)
- ½ cup diced carrots (can be frozen)
- ½ cup diced bell peppers (can be frozen)
- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 2 Tbsp. coconut aminos (or low-sodium soy sauce)
- 2 cups cooked brown rice or quinoa (can be frozen)
- 3 Tbsp. canola or peanut oil
- ¼ cup low-sodium vegetable broth
- ½ package extra-firm tofu

Preparation

1. Drain water from tofu by placing several paper towels on a plate. Place tofu on paper towels, then top with more paper towels. Add another plate as a weight. Let sit for 10 minutes, allowing excess water to drain. The less liquid, the crispier the tofu will be.

2. Sauté garlic, onion, and ginger in a medium saucepan with 1 Tbsp. of oil.

3. Add carrots, broccoli, and bell peppers with 1 cup of water and cover for 5-7 minutes until vegetables are tender but still crisp.

4. While vegetables are cooking, place tofu in a bowl and press with paper towel until most liquid is removed, repeating as necessary. Cut tofu into 1” cubes.

5. Remove vegetables from pan and set aside.

6. Add 2 Tbsp. oil to pan and heat. Add cubed tofu and cook until slightly brown, stirring as needed.

7. Mix broth, cornstarch, coconut aminos or low sodium soy sauce in a bowl.

8. Add vegetables back to the pan with tofu. Add sauce. Heat and stir until sauce is thick.

9. Serve with brown rice or quinoa and enjoy!

Nutrition Facts

Per serving, approximate. An allowance of +/- 10% is made for nutrients per serving based on database variances.

One serving: ½ cup brown rice, 1.5 cups stir fry
Servings: 4

- Calories: 300
- Total fat: 14 g
  - Saturated fat: 2 g
  - Trans fat: 0 g
- Cholesterol: 0 mg
- Sodium: 320 mg
- Total carbohydrate: 35 g
  - Dietary fiber: 3 g
  - Total sugars: 3 g
- Protein: 10 g
- Potassium: 347 mg
- Phosphorus: 205 mg
  (only ~82 mg absorbed)

Plant-based foods that I plan to try this month:

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