

Low Phosphorus Diet



Why does my child need a low phosphorus diet?

Phosphorus is a mineral found in most foods. It helps the body in many ways, but, too much, can cause serious problems. ... People with high phosphorus levels are at risk for bone problems. They also may have red eyes and itchiness.

It can be very hard to limit phosphorus intake because it is found in so many foods.

Dairy, and other protein foods, have the most phosphorus. Because the body needs protein, we cannot keep phosphorus completely out of our diet.

What foods can my child eat?

Your child should eat only 1 serving of a dairy product each day. Your child should also eat only 1 age-appropriate serving of a protein food at 3 meals per day. Other high phosphorus foods should only be eaten once in a while. If your child is still hungry at meals, give more fruits, vegetables and starches. Do not give more meat or dairy.

What foods should my child limit?

Protein Foods (Eat 1 serving per meal)

Meat / Animal protein	Other	Nuts/legumes
Beef	Eggs	Nuts
Pork	Fish	Peanut butter
Liver	Duck	Other nut butters
Chicken		Dried beans
Turkey		Lentils

Dairy Products (Eat 1 serving per day)

Include cow's milk, cheese, pudding, yogurt, and ice cream.

Phosphorus in other foods

Other high phosphorus foods that should be limited in your child's diet include: corn, peas, whole grain foods, beverages with phosphoric acid and chocolate.

Phosphorus is also used as a preservative in many dried and pre-packaged foods. Look at the **ingredient list** for words that include "**phos**" to see if they contain phosphorus. If they do, they should be limited in your child's diet. Some examples of phosphorus additives include:

- **Phosphoric Acid** (often found in soda)
- Calcium **Phosphate**
- Disodium **Phosphate**
- Tricalcium **Phosphate**
- Monopotassium **Phosphate**
- Pyro**phosphate** poly**phosphates**

What are some low phosphorus alternatives for my child's favorite foods?

High Phosphorus Foods	Low Phosphorus Alternatives
Milk products	Rice milk, Liquid non-dairy creamer
Cream soups	Broth-based soups
Whole grain products, including whole wheat bread, brown rice, whole wheat pasta	Refined grains, including white bread, white rice and regular pasta
Ready-to-eat or boxed rolls, pancake or waffle mixes	Homemade rolls, pancakes, waffles
Peanut and other nut butters	Jelly, jam, honey*
Chocolate (candy bars, desserts)	Chocolate-free candy or treats
Colas and beverages with "phosphoric acid"	Lemon-lime sodas, ginger ale, root beer, regular water

* Honey is not recommended for any child under the age of 1 year.

Diet alone may not be enough to control phosphorus. In that case, a medicine called a phosphate binder may need to be taken with meals. The binder absorbs extra phosphorus from food. You can think of it as a "phosphorus sponge." This medicine must be taken with your meals and snacks. If food is not in your stomach when you take the binder it is much less effective.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.