



EATING 101 RU DINING HEALTHY?



A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE RU HEALTHY DINING TEAM

A Joint Program Between Rutgers Dining Services and The New Jersey Institute for Food, Nutrition, and Health

Balance the Sodium-Potassium Scale

Are you worried about consuming too much sodium in your diet? Potassium to the rescue! Potassium is the yin to sodium's yang. Sodium, found primarily in highly processed foods (over 70% of sodium in the average diet comes from processed foods), is associated with raising blood pressure, which can increase the risk of cardiovascular disease. Potassium, on the other hand, found primarily in fruits and vegetables, can help lower blood pressure. The human body needs more potassium than sodium to function at its best, however the average American diet is the opposite, consisting of far more sodium than potassium. By increasing potassium intake and lowering sodium intake, you can keep your blood pressure in a healthy range and protect your heart health. See the suggestions below for balancing your own sodium-potassium scale!



Potassium



Sodium

Tips to Increase Potassium Intake:

- Try to eat a fruit or vegetable with every meal
- Grab a banana on your way out of the dining hall to snack on later
- Choose a potassium-rich potato or sweet potato as your dinner side
- Start your meal with a potassium-packed veggie soup or salad
- Enjoy an omelet stuffed with spinach, tomatoes, and broccoli for breakfast
- Top low-fat yogurt with cantaloupe and honey for a sweet, potassium-rich treat
- Check the nutrition label: foods with at least 20% of the daily value (DV) are considered high in potassium

Tips to Reduce Sodium Intake:

- Reduce consumption of ultra-processed foods such as chips, deli meats, and frozen meals, or choose a low-sodium version of the same food
- Go easy on condiments like soy sauce, ketchup, and salad dressings, as these are typically packed with sodium
- Use herbs and spices or a squeeze of lemon to season food instead of table salt
- Take smaller portions of foods that are high in sodium
- Review the sodium content of foods served in the dining hall on the Rutgers app
- Check the nutrition label: foods with 5% or less of the daily value (DV) are considered low in sodium

Potassi-yum!

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References: *Potassium*. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/potassium/>. Accessed on: February 27, 2022. *A Primer on Potassium*. <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/sodium/potassium>. Accessed on: February 27, 2022. *The Role of Potassium and Sodium in Your Diet*. <https://www.cdc.gov/salt/potassium.htm>. Accessed on: February 27, 2022. *How to Reduce Sodium*. <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/sodium/how-to-reduce-sodium>. Accessed on: February 27, 2022.

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