



All about Potassium

The human body is composed of numerous minerals which are required for the bodily systems to work properly. Potassium is the third most abundant mineral in the body and is necessary for growth, nerve impulse transmission, healthy heart function, and building muscle. Nerve and muscle development are dependent upon on potassium. Low potassium can result in muscle cramps. Potassium is eliminated through urine and sweat. Appropriate potassium levels can help maintain healthy blood pressure.

Effects of low potassium on the body

Normally, potassium intake is sufficient for the body to run smoothly. Generally, low potassium results because this valuable mineral is being flushed through the urinary or gastrointestinal tracts, and even proper amounts of potassium rich foods cannot counterbalance the effects. This occurs when:

- ** One uses diuretics (Medication which causes body to expel water)
- ** Excess production of Aldosterone (a hormone that prompts potassium production in kidney)
- ** Eating disorders
- ** Dysfunction of kidney
- ** Excessive vomiting or diarrhea
- ** Certain medications (i.e...blood pressure)

When these occur the symptoms of low potassium levels will manifest as:

- weakness
- general tiredness
- constipation
- cramping of muscles
- heart arrhythmia

Potassium rich foods:

Fruits

cantaloupe
bananas
oranges
strawberries
apricots
tomatoes
papaya

Vegetables

potatoes
cabbage
Brussel sprouts
Bell peppers
Okra
Cucumbers
Eggplant
Squash
Spinach

Protein

tuna
halibut (type of fish)
lima beans
salmon

Other

Honey
Parsley
Turmeric
Nuts and seeds

(source: <http://www.potassiumrichfoods.net>)