

Sodium

Sodium (salt or Na) helps the cells in your body balance fluids and chemicals. Healthy kidneys filter extra sodium out of your blood. When your kidneys are not working well, sodium may build up in your blood. Too much sodium can raise your blood pressure, which can harm your kidneys. Too much sodium can also make your body store fluid. Extra fluid could lead to swelling in your feet, hands and face.



One of the best things that you can do to help protect your kidneys is to limit how much salt you eat. This can be tricky. Sodium is hidden in many store-bought foods. You may want to shop for fresh foods or foods marked “low sodium.” Some foods that you might want to avoid are:

- Bacon
- Barbeque sauce
- Canned vegetables
- Canned meats
- Cheeses
- Chips
- Crackers
- Deli meats
- Frozen dinners
- Ketchup
- Nuts
- Pretzels
- Salad dressings

Be careful when using salt substitutes. These often have too much potassium. If you have problems with potassium, check with your doctor or dietitian before using salt substitutes.

American Kidney Fund
6110 Executive Blvd., Suite 1010
Rockville, MD 20852
Call our toll-free HelpLine at 866.300.2900
or email us at helpline@kidneyfund.org.