Phosphorus and Kidney Disease

About phosphorus
Phosphorus is the second most common mineral in your body. It helps with many body functions. It helps to build bones and teeth, make energy, and repair tissues and cells.
Phosphorus is found in most foods. Common sources are milk and dairy products, cola drinks, meats, whole grains, chocolate, legumes, nuts and seeds.

Phosphorus and kidney disease
Your kidneys filter waste products from the blood. Healthy kidneys are able to remove extra phosphorus in the blood. With kidney disease, the kidneys cannot remove phosphorus well. Problems may occur if the phosphorus level is too high.

- High phosphorus levels in the blood may cause calcium to be pulled out of bones. This calcium loss may lead to thinner and weaker bones.
- High phosphorus and calcium levels in the blood may combine to form stone-like deposits in organs and tissues.
- High phosphorus levels in the blood may cause calcium levels to drop. Signs include muscle cramps or spasms, bone and joint pain, itching, rash and red eyes.

Treatment
Diet and medicines are used to control and decrease your risk of problems with phosphorus.

- Your doctor may order a medicine that binds with phosphorus. The medicine is taken with food to prevent phosphorus from being absorbed. Follow your doctor's instructions for the amount and how often to take the medicine.
- Limit or avoid high phosphorus foods. The body needs protein, so limit meat as advised by your dietitian. Read food labels carefully. Look for ingredient names with “phos” in them. For example:
  - Aluminum phosphate
  - Dicalcium phosphate
  - Hexametaphosphate
  - Phosphoric acid
  - Pyrophosphate
  - Sodium polyphosphate

Limit or avoid these high phosphorus foods | Use these lower phosphorus foods
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Milk and milk products, such as milk, creamer, cheese, yogurt and ice cream | Non-dairy creamers, unenriched rice or soy milk, cream cheese, sour cream, gelatin, sherbert, popsicles
Dark drinks, such as beer, colas, chocolate milk | Lemon-lime soda, homemade lemonade and iced teas
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limit or avoid these high phosphorus foods</th>
<th>Use these lower phosphorus foods</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk or dark chocolate</td>
<td>Gummy candies, hard candies, vanilla or fruit flavored sweets</td>
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<td>Whole grain breads, cereals, crackers, brown and wild rice</td>
<td>Corn, refined wheat or rice products, French or white bread</td>
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<td>Nuts, seeds, nut butters</td>
<td>Jelly, honey, butter</td>
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<td>Processed meats, such as hot dogs, sausages, bologna, organ</td>
<td>Fresh or frozen beef, lamb, pork, seafood, chicken or turkey</td>
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<td>meats, sardines</td>
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<td>Starchy vegetables, such as potatoes, corn, peas, beans and</td>
<td>Green beans, wax beans, spinach, carrots, celery or cucumber</td>
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<td>legumes</td>
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Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

For more health information, contact the Library for Health Information at 614-293-3707 or e-mail health-info@osu.edu.

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