

Community Health Newsletter

Week Sixteen



P: is for Potassium



Potassium is a dietary mineral. Potassium is an electrolyte essential for the proper functioning of all cells, tissues, and organs in the body such as the kidney, nerves, and muscles. Potassium is required for normal heart and other electrical activity. Potassium is essential for controlling urine output.

Potassium supports a variety of bodily functions such as metabolism. Potassium works with sodium to

maintain the body's water balance. Having too much or too little potassium can have very serious health consequences.

Meat and fish such as salmon, cod, flounder, and sardines are good sources of potassium, as are soy products. Vegetables including broccoli, peas, lima beans, tomatoes, potatoes (especially their skins), sweet potatoes, and winter squashes are good sources of potassium. Bananas, citrus fruits, cantaloupe, kiwi, prunes, and apricots contain potassium. Milk and yogurt, as well as nuts, are also excellent sources of potassium

The food you eat usually supplies all the required potassium. However, kidney disease and gastrointestinal disease with vomiting and diarrhea as well as some drugs, diuretics, remove potassium from the body.

Most Americans eat too much salt and do not get enough potassium in their diets¹. Eat a variety of food, especially fruits and vegetables, and fewer processed foods.

¹ Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005

Recipe: Banana Bread

3 large well-ripened bananas
1 egg or egg substitute
2 Tablespoons of plain applesauce

1/3 cup milk
1/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon baking powder

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Peel the bananas. Put them in a mixing bowl. Mash the bananas with a fork.
3. Add the applesauce, egg, milk, sugar, salt, baking soda, and baking powder. Mix well with the fork.
4. Slowly stir the flour into the banana mixture. Stir for 20 seconds until the flour is moist.
5. Lightly grease the bread pan with a little oil -OR- cooking spray -OR- line it with wax paper.

ACTIVITY TIP

Want to work your abs? Do the banana!

Lie on the floor with your arms extended over your head and your legs together. Breathe steadily and evenly as you tighten your stomach muscles and SLOWLY raise your upper body and legs off the floor.

DO NOT hold your breath as you keep your head between your arms as you slowly raise your upper body and legs off the floor in a banana-like position. Work up to holding the position for 30 seconds.

Talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.

-Dietary Guidelines for America 2005

Stomach Flu

Soda, whether it is Coke or 7 UP, is not a good fluid to give to a child with vomiting and diarrhea. Water or an oral rehydration solution, like Pedialyte, are much better options. Rehydration solutions have sugar and electrolytes to prevent and treat dehydration.

6. Pour the batter into the bread pan.
7. Bake for 45 minutes until a toothpick inserted near the middle comes out clean.
8. Let the bread cool for 5 minutes before removing it from the pan.

Notes: The key to good banana bread is to use well-ripened bananas.

Source: Adapted from:
Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Network
Website Recipes
The Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Program

