

Renal Dietetic Service For Kidney Failure Patients

Who Are The Renal Dietitians?

Yvonne Bradburn
Maria Barrett
Joanne Maguire
Rowan Eyles
Adele Taylor
Bridget Hines (Dietetic Assistant)

We are specialist dietitians working with kidney patients

You can contact us in the renal office on 0121 424 0675

Where Do We Work?

Ward 3 BHH
Low clearance clinic BHH (every Tuesday)
Low clearance clinic SOL (1st of Tuesday of the month)
Low clearance clinic GHH (1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month)
Low clearance clinic Lichfield (2nd Thursday of the month)
Dialysis clinic BHH (Wednesday)
General nephrology clinic BHH (Thursday)
Glaxo renal unit (BHH)
Solihull renal unit
Runcorn road renal unit
Castle Vale renal unit
Lichfield renal unit
CAPD unit
Home Haemodialysis

What Do We Do?

We hope to see you regularly to assess your diet to make sure that it is adequate in protein, fat, carbohydrate, vitamins and minerals.

We provide you with **individualised** dietary advice according to your recent blood results.

When you start attending clinic you may not need to make any adjustments to your diet but an initial assessment with the dietitian is necessary to find out what you eat. It is also an opportunity to ask any questions about diet and kidney disease.

At certain times you may be advised to make changes to your diet to help prevent waste products building up in your blood. These changes will help to keep you well.

The following sections discuss reasons why you may need to see the Renal Dietitian

If You Have A Reduced Food Intake

When you have a reduced kidney function waste products can build up in the blood to high levels. When this happens it can cause some of the following symptoms:

- Poor appetite
- Taste changes
- Nausea and vomiting
- Tiredness
- Constipation



If you do suffer with these symptoms you might find it difficult to eat well and you may notice a reduction in your food intake. You may notice that you are losing body weight.

If you have a poor appetite or are losing weight unintentionally then try some of the following suggestions:

- Spread your food into several small meals and snacks by eating every 2-3 hours.
- Try to eat the main part of the meal and then eat a pudding a few hours later.
- Try to eat meat/poultry/fish/milk/cheese/eggs at least twice a day.
- Try and eat protein foods in sandwiches or on toast if you are struggling to eat large meals.
- Add extra energy to your diet by choosing foods that are high in fat and sugar.
- If you are a diabetic choose foods that are high in fat to provide more energy.

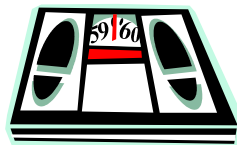
If you are not eating well, please contact the dietitians for advice and suggestions. The Dietitian may ask your GP to prescribe nutritional products to help supplement your food intake, if necessary. Nutritional supplements are available in a variety of drinks, puddings and powders.

If You Want To Lose Weight

Eating more calories than you use will result in weight gain. Even a small amount of weight loss will help to protect your heart and kidneys, help control blood pressure and diabetes.

If you have a good appetite AND are motivated to lose weight THEN specialist dietetic input is available ensuring safe and effective weight loss.

Please discuss this with the Dietitian.



If You Have a High Potassium Level

The normal levels for potassium are 3.5-5.5mmol/l

Potassium is a mineral that keeps your heartbeat regular and your muscles working.

The kidneys remove extra potassium from your blood. If your kidneys do not work well potassium levels can rise. It may become necessary for the dietitians to advise you on how to cut down your potassium intake from food. Generally we ask you to

- boil all your vegetables and potatoes and throw away the water
- cut down on the amount or types of fruit eaten
- avoid ALL fruit and vegetable juices

There are other reasons for having a high potassium level such as some medications and uncontrolled blood sugar levels, if you are a diabetic. Ask the Doctors, Nurses or Dietitians for more information.

If You Have High Blood Pressure

A high salt intake is linked with high blood pressure and heart disease. It is advised that you reduce your salt intake to help control your blood pressure.

Try these suggestions:

- Do not add salt at the table
- Use minimal salt in cooking
- Reduce your intake of salty foods e.g. ham, bacon, cheese, crisps, takeaway foods, processed/convenience foods
- Use herbs and spices to flavour foods
- Avoid salt substitutes i.e. Lo Salt



If You Are Short Of Breath

The kidneys remove fluid from the body as urine. When you have a reduced kidney function the kidneys may not be able to remove the fluid adequately. You may notice swelling of the ankles and/or become short of breath. This may be due to too much fluid in the body.

It might be necessary to limit the amount you drink each day. You may also be asked to restrict foods which contain a lot of fluid e.g. gravy, custard, milk puddings, jelly, yoghurt.

If you are advised to limit your fluid intake it is also necessary to reduce your salt intake because salt increases thirst.

If You Are Prescribed Phosphate Binder Medication

The normal blood levels for phosphate are 0.8-1.8mmol/l

Phosphate is a mineral that helps keep your bones healthy. When you have a reduced kidney function the level of phosphate in the blood can rise. Itchy skin and eyes are early signs of a high phosphate level.

Foods that are high in phosphate include

- Cheese,
- Fish such as pilchards, sardines, whitebait, herring and kippers
- Shellfish
- Offal



If you are well nourished and eat foods high in phosphate regularly then the Dietitian will advise you to reduce your intake of these foods.

Often, if your blood phosphate level is high, the Doctor will prescribe phosphate binder medication. These can include Phosex, Calcichew/Adcal, Renagel, Alucaps and Fosrenol. These tablets need to be taken with meals. The Dietitian will advise you when to take the tablets based on your individual meal pattern and food choices.

If you need to take phosphate binders then these will help keep your bones healthy

If You Have Diabetes

If you have kidney problems AND diabetes the previous information all still applies to you.

It is important that you follow the advice given by the Doctors and Diabetes Nurses to help control your blood sugar levels. Poor blood sugar control can lead to an increase in your potassium level and can increase your thirst therefore making it more difficult to stick to a fluid allowance, if advised

REMEMBER

You are an individual each with your own unique set of blood results.

The Dietitian, by assessing your diet regularly, will give you advice to try and control/maintain your blood results and help you to feel well.

Ask to see the Dietitian when you attend clinic if you have any dietary concerns - you do not need an appointment!

If you are worried about your diet or if your appetite is poor please ring one of us:

Yvonne / Maria / Joanne / Rowan/ Adele / Bridget on 0121 424 0675



For More Information

- Internet

Remember the quality of information on the internet is not always good, so be careful not to follow everything you read. A useful website is www.kidney.org.uk

- Library

Many good books have been published for renal patients, their families and carers covering a wide range of topics, including diet. There are also renal recipe books available.