

Electrolyte Fact Sheet

What Are Electrolytes?

Simply put, **Electrolytes** are minerals that conduct electricity. The term **electrolytes** is often used to express the presence of three or more of the following minerals in food or drinks. (The primary ions of electrolytes are **sodium** (Na⁺), **potassium** (K⁺), **calcium** (Ca²⁺), **magnesium** (Mg²⁺), **chloride** (Cl⁻), **hydrogen phosphate** (HPO₄²⁻), and **hydrogen carbonate** (HCO₃⁻). The electric charge symbols of plus (+) and minus (-) indicate that the substance in question is ionic in nature and has an imbalanced distribution of electrons, which is the result of chemical dissociation.)

Why Are They Important?

Both muscle tissue and neurons (the nervous system) are considered electric tissue of the body. For example, muscle contraction is dependent upon the presence of **calcium** (Ca²⁺), **sodium** (Na⁺), and **potassium** (K⁺). Without sufficient levels of these key electrolytes, muscle weakness or severe muscle contractions may occur. **REMEMBER YOUR HEART IS A MUSCLE!** If you have heart problems such as high or low blood pressure, or other issues such as headaches or achy muscles, research demonstrates a potassium deficiency is the likely cause.

How Important is Potassium?

Potassium is equally important as calcium and sodium yet people often lack the necessary amounts of potassium for a healthy lifestyle. Most people are not aware of the minimum amounts required, unlike sodium or calcium where people are aware of the daily requirements. If you look on food labels rarely will you find recommended daily requirements for potassium, whereas sodium and calcium are regularly listed. As a result, the general population is potassium deficient and suffers from fatigue, muscle cramps, headaches, and heart problems. The heart is without a doubt the most important muscle in our bodies. Yet it suffers the most due to the fact that it never stops moving.

How Much Potassium Do I Need?

The FDA recommends 3,500mg as the minimum daily requirement for a healthy lifestyle. If you are active for one hour or more a day your minimum daily requirement is 4,700mg. Before moving on, stop here and really give this some thought. That is a lot of potassium to consume. For example 1 medium banana only has around 350mg that is far from your daily required amount of 3,500mg, Another example is Gatorade, Gatorade has 35mg's that is nothing compared to how much your muscles really need. In reality it is just enough for the Gatorade company to market their product as "The Electrolyte Drink" when really it's just sugar water and if you look at the ingredients it doesn't even have sugar it has high fructose corn syrup.

How do I get the amounts that I need?

There are lots of foods you can get your potassium from. I have listed many of them below along with the amount of potassium in milligrams (mg) per food items. Keep in mind these are only approximations, they are not exact due to food items ranging in sizes. I also recommend making your own electrolyte drinks, I have developed a few recipes that are easy to prepare.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call or email me.

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Food Sources of Potassium ranked by milligrams of potassium per standard amount, also showing calories in the standard amount. (The AI for adults is 4,700 mg/day potassium.)

Food, Standard Amount	Potassium (mg)	Calories
Sweet potato, baked, 1 potato (146 g)	694	131
Tomato paste, ¼ cup	664	54
Beet greens, cooked, ½ cup	655	19
Potato, baked, flesh, 1 potato (156 g)	610	145
White beans, canned, ½ cup	595	153
Yogurt, plain, non-fat, 8-oz container	579	127
Tomato puree, ½ cup	549	48
Clams, canned, 3 oz	534	126
Yogurt, plain, low-fat, 8-oz container	531	143
Prune juice, ¾ cup	530	136
Carrot juice, ¾ cup	517	71
Blackstrap molasses, 1 Tbsp	498	47
Halibut, cooked, 3 oz	490	119
Soybeans, green, cooked, ½ cup	485	127
Tuna, yellowfin, cooked, 3 oz	484	118
Lima beans, cooked, ½ cup	484	104
Winter squash, cooked, ½ cup	448	40
Soybeans, mature, cooked, ½ cup	443	149
Rockfish, Pacific, cooked, 3 oz	442	103
Cod, Pacific, cooked, 3 oz	439	89
Bananas, 1 medium	422	105
Spinach, cooked, ½ cup	419	21
Tomato juice, ¾ cup	417	31
Tomato sauce, ½ cup	405	39
Peaches, dried, uncooked, ¼ cup	398	96
Prunes, stewed, ½ cup	398	133
Milk, non-fat, 1 cup	382	83
Pork chop, center loin, cooked, 3 oz	382	197
Apricots, dried, uncooked, ¼ cup	378	78
Rainbow trout, farmed, cooked, 3 oz	375	144
Pork loin, center rib (roasts), lean, roasted, 3 oz	371	190
Buttermilk, cultured, low-fat, 1 cup	370	98
Cantaloupe, ¼ medium	368	47
1%-2% milk, 1 cup	366	102-122
Honeydew melon, 1/8 medium	365	58
Lentils, cooked, ½ cup	365	115
Plantains, cooked, ½ cup slices	358	90
Kidney beans, cooked, ½ cup	358	112
Orange juice, ¾ cup	355	85
Split peas, cooked, ½ cup	355	116
Yogurt, plain, whole milk, 8 oz container	352	138