



KIDNEY-FRIENDLY SUPERFOODS

SQUASH

Technically a fruit, winter squash is cooked like a root vegetable and includes butternut, pumpkin, acorn, delicata, Hubbard, and spaghetti squash. Summer squashes are more tender and include zucchini and yellow squash.

Why is Squash a Superfood?

- Squash is versatile and can be served sautéed, roasted, and pureed
- Winter squash can be served as a meal bowl baked with a protein/vegetable or soup
- Squash is a good source of vitamin C and B6 both important nutrients for health
- They are a good source of fiber and rich in antioxidants

Squash and Kidney Disease

Squash varieties are generally low in sodium and phosphorus but high in potassium. The amount of potassium you can have each day will depend on your stage of kidney disease or the type of treatment you receive:

CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE (CKD)/TRANSPLANT

Squash is fine for earlier stages of CKD and kidney transplant when potassium is well-managed without dietary restriction.

HEMODIALYSIS (3 TIMES/WEEK)

With concern for potassium levels, consider having squash in small amounts.

DAILY HOME AND NOCTURNAL HEMODIALYSIS/ PERITONEAL DIALYSIS

Squash can be a good choice for many peritoneal and home hemodialysis patients when you may need to eat more potassium rich foods.

KIDNEY STONES

Eating squash will not have an effect on forming kidney stones.

Potassium Levels per ½ Cup Serving

SQUASH VARIETY	POTASSIUM
Kabocha squash (Japanese winter type)	200 mg
Zucchini and yellow squash	162 mg
Delicata squash	250 mg
Butternut, Hubbard, spaghetti squash	290 mg
Acorn squash	390 mg
Pumpkin pie	288 mg in 1/8 pie slice (also 150 mg phosphorous)

The National Renal Diet states a low potassium food is less than 200 mg per 1/2 cup serving

Recipe

HOW TO PREPARE DELICATA SQUASH (also known as sweet potato squash)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Clean the squash with tap water
2. Cut squash lengthwise
3. Clear out seeds
4. Cut ¼ inch slices
5. Lay out slices on a sheet pan lined with parchment paper
6. Season with pepper
7. Bake for 10 minutes, turn slices, and bake an additional 10 minutes (times may vary based on your oven so test for doneness, done when fork inserts easily)

NUTRIENTS PER SERVING*:

Calories.....	38
Carbohydrates.....	9 g
Protein.....	1 g
Dietary Fiber.....	3 g
Fat.....	0.35 g
Sodium.....	1 mg
Potassium.....	250 mg
Phosphorus.....	28 mg

*Can be served as a low potassium food in ¼ cup serving size



For more information, contact the National Kidney Foundation

Toll-free help line: **855.NKF.CARES** or email: nkfcare@kidney.org

The National Kidney Foundation wishes to thank its Council on Renal Nutrition (CRN) for the development of this fact sheet.