



# EATING WELL WITH KIDNEY DISEASE ON A LIMITED BUDGET

## Healthy Eating Support for People with Kidney Disease

It can be hard to afford enough food during times of stress like job loss, illness, or unexpected expenses. If you're living with kidney disease, this pressure can feel even heavier. The goal is to get enough to eat, make the best choices you can with the resources you have, and use tools that help stretch your food dollars.

## Getting Key Nutrients on a Budget

Even on a tight budget, you can still get the nutrients that help protect your kidneys. Start with these easy, affordable options.

### PROTEIN

You can get the protein your kidneys need from simple, affordable foods.

- Affordable options: eggs, dried beans, lentils, tofu, peanut butter, low sodium canned tuna, chicken, or salmon.
- Stretch meat by mixing in beans, lentils, rice, or vegetables.

### SODIUM

Lowering sodium is possible even on a tight budget.

- Limit processed foods when possible.
- Rinse canned vegetables and beans.
- Flavor foods with herbs and spices.

## Quick and Affordable Meal Ideas

### BREAKFAST

- Oatmeal with cinnamon and apple
- Eggs with toast and berries

### LUNCH

- Tuna or egg salad sandwich
- Rice and beans

### DINNER

- Baked chicken with carrots and rice
- Pasta with garlic, oil, and green beans

### SNACKS

- Unsalted popcorn
- Apple with peanut butter
- Hard boiled eggs



## Smart Swaps

Small swaps can make meals more affordable and kidney friendly. Here are some easy ideas to try.

INSTEAD OF	SWAP FOR
Fresh fish	Low sodium canned tuna or frozen fish
Fresh berries	Frozen or seasonal fruit
Lean meats	Eggs, tofu, beans, canned chicken
Store bought broth	Homemade broth from scraps
Fresh herbs	Dried herbs or simple blends
Bottled dressings	Olive oil, vinegar, lemon

## Meal Planning Tips

- Plan meals and make a grocery list.
- Cook in batches and freeze leftovers.
- Buy grains, beans, and lentils in bulk.
- Use canned or frozen produce.
- Store foods properly.
- Choose seasonal produce.

## Your Kidney Friendly Action Plan

- Pick two low-cost protein foods to keep on hand.
- Add one frozen vegetable to your weekly meals.
- Plan two meals using ingredients you already have.
- Compare labels for sodium and potassium.
- Check one local food resource.

## Questions to Ask your Dietitian or Social Worker

- What foods fit my budget and kidney needs?
- How much protein should I eat each day?
- Canned, packaged, or frozen
- Which foods or drinks should I limit the most?
- When I have limited options, which foods are most important to choose or avoid?
- Can you help me find local food support programs?

## Notes and Helpful Resources

There are resources and assistance programs available to assist with food access. To find all the local resources in your area visit an online resource hub such as [findhelp.org](http://findhelp.org) or talk with your social worker or other care provider.

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a government program that helps individuals with low incomes get the food they need.
  - SNAP-Ed is a complimentary initiative that provides many useful nutrition and cooking resources both online and through in-person programs.
- Food banks and food pantries are available in most areas and provide direct assistance with food on a weekly or monthly basis
- Meals on Wheels is a national program that delivers essential meals and services to seniors.



Visit the NKF Nutrition Hub to find a dietitian, recipes, and kidney friendly tips.

For more information, contact the National Kidney Foundation

Toll-free help line: **855.NKF.CARES** or email: [nkfcares@kidney.org](mailto:nkfcares@kidney.org)

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