

Gift Suggestions for Dialysis Patients

Have friends or relatives on dialysis? Wondering what to buy for them during special occasions (birthdays, festive celebrations, gatherings, etc.)? Be worry-free! Even though dialysis patients need to control their diet and fluid intake, there are many gifts that are beneficial for them.

A. Food Category

Food is essential for everyone and dialysis friends need to watch out for nutrients such as protein, phosphate, potassium, salt, fluid and carbohydrates (if one has diabetes) on top of others.

Tips for dialysis patients:

- Know your blood test and choose the right foods.
- Eat in moderation.

1. Fruit Basket

- These provides them with good dietary fibre but also antioxidants together in some of the fruit options.
- Always choose lower potassium fruits and limit higher potassium fruits.

| ✓ Lower potassium fruit | ✗ Higher potassium fruit |
|--|---|
| Apple, apricot, dragonfruit, figs, kiwi, orange, persimmons, pineapple, plum, watermelon and more. | Banana, durian, guava, honeydew, jackfruit, papaya, peach, pomelo, rockmelon, soursop and many more |

**Avoid small round fruits such as blueberries and grapes as these fruits may put patients at risk of choking.*

- Click [here](#) for an extensive list of higher and lower potassium fruits options.

2. Power Snacks

- Go for fresh foods! Avoid pre-packaged products as they usually have a higher sodium content.
- For savoury snacks, opt for high protein snacks such as those that contain egg, chicken, fish or meat such as:
 - Egg tart, chicken pau, chicken pie, chicken siew mai, chicken bun, tuna bun, chicken wrap, chicken / mutton kebab, chicken / mutton tikka, chicken dumplings, chicken/tuna/egg sandwich, hard boiled egg, satay (without peanut gravy).
- Limit the following savoury snacks which tend to be higher in phosphate, potassium, or salt content:
 - Potato chips, food item containing coconut products (e.g. kaya), chocolates, malted drinks, oats or wholegrain products, sardines and nuts.
- For sweet snacks, it is fine for patients to have occasional, portion sized treats, even if they are diabetic, as long as it is not taken on a regular basis. Examples are muffin, steamed cake, chiffon cake, butter cake, wafer biscuits.
- Limit the following sweet snacks which tend to be higher in potassium and phosphate content:
 - Food item containing coconut products (e.g. kaya), chocolates, oats or wholegrain products, nuts as well as higher potassium fruits.

Note:

- Homemade muffins/cakes can be healthier by cutting down the sugar and fat content. You can also replace baking powder with cream of Tatar and baking soda.
- Hot food needs to be served hot while cold food needs to be served cold. Ensure there is sufficient storage period if you plan to give frozen food.
- Remind your dialysis friends to take their phosphate binders with their snacks if necessary!

3. Beverages

- Suggested serving size for beverages to keep at 100-250ml individual pack
- Recommended beverage options include:
 - Mineral water, unsweetened tea bags, Chinese tea, plain tea, black coffee, reduced sugar/unsweetened drinks (e.g. chrysanthemum tea, green tea) and homemade unsweetened lemonade.

Note: As dialysis patients have reduced ability to pass urine, it is important for them to control their fluid intake.

B. Non-Food Category

Kitchen ware may be a good helper to encourage dialysis patients to have healthy and nutritious meals at home.

- Electrical steamer pot/cooker
- Insulated lunch box
- Measuring bottle (500ml)
- Non-stick pan
- Storage container
- Slow cooker
- Thermo flask (250ml)
- Toaster

