

10 Questions to Ask Your Nephrologist

A one-page guide to walk out of your appointment knowing your *own* sodium, potassium, phosphorus and protein limits.

A renal diet is never one-size-fits-all. The right numbers for you depend on your CKD stage, your latest labs, and whether you're pre-dialysis or on dialysis — and only your care team can set them.

This little guide isn't medical advice. It simply helps you have a better conversation so you leave the office with your personal limits written down, instead of guessing.

How to use it

1. Print this out and bring it to your next appointment.
2. Ask the questions that fit your situation — you don't need all ten.
3. Write your doctor's answer in the space beside each one.
4. Tape the answers next to the Daily Tracker on your fridge.

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Please read first. This material is for general educational purposes only and is not medical advice. It does not diagnose, treat, cure, prevent, or reverse any disease, and it does not replace your doctor or renal dietitian — it is a tool to help you talk with them. **Always follow the personal limits your own care team gives you.**

TAKE THIS TO YOUR APPOINTMENT

The questions — and room to write the answers

Your own numbers

1 What should my daily limit be for sodium, potassium and phosphorus?

These are the three numbers the recipes and tracker are built around.

2 How much protein should I be eating each day — and what kind?

Protein needs can be very different before and during dialysis.

3 How much fluid should I drink in a day, and does that include soups and coffee?

Some people need to limit fluids; others don't. It's worth asking.

Your stage & where you stand

4 What stage of CKD am I in right now, and what was my most recent eGFR?

Knowing your stage helps everything else make sense.

5 Am I pre-dialysis, or is dialysis something we're planning for?

This single answer changes a lot of the diet advice.

6 Do I have any other conditions — like diabetes or high blood pressure — that should change how I eat?

Many renal diets have to balance more than one condition at once.

The questions (continued)

Medicines & phosphorus

7 Am I taking a phosphate binder? If so, when exactly should I take it with meals?

Binders only work if the timing is right — it's easy to get wrong.

8 Are any of my current medicines or supplements something I should adjust with this diet?

Bring your full list — including anything over-the-counter.

9 Is a salt substitute safe for me, or could it raise my potassium too much?

Many “lite” salts use potassium chloride, which isn't safe for everyone.

Warning signs

10 What symptoms mean I should call you right away — and what's your number?

Know the signs (swelling, breathlessness, muscle weakness) before you need them.

One more thing. Ask if you can be referred to a **renal dietitian**. They are the experts in turning your lab numbers into real meals — and once you have your personal sodium, potassium and phosphorus limits, the recipes and the Daily Tracker in your cookbook do the day-to-day work for you.

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