

Potassium-Rich Foods Lower Stroke Risks

Posted in: [Food](#), [Health](#), [News](#) by [Heather McClees](#) on 30 Sep, 2014

(TRFW News) Bananas and other fruits and veggies aren't just great for keeping your weight in check; they're also proven to be some of the best sources of potassium to help you prevent heart strokes. (1) Potassium lowers stress hormones in the body and also reduces blood pressure. High levels of stress both mentally and physically lead to an increased risk of having a heart stroke. A new study has found that potassium-rich foods are especially effective for helping women reduce their risk of stroke, along with hypertension and high blood pressure. (2)

What other factors go into play?

A study performed on over 90,000 post-menopausal women found that those who ate an average of 2600 milligrams of potassium a day had anywhere from a 12-16% reduced risk for developing a stroke. (2) The women were monitored and tested for a period of 11 years. The study confirmed that those who didn't have previous blood pressure problems had an even lower risk (28%) of developing a stroke than those who did have previous blood pressure problems. The women who ate the most potassium (versus taking a pill) were also found to have a 21% reduced risk of developing hypertension and found to have a reduced risk of early death. (1)

How does potassium work?

Potassium works to maintain normal water and electrolyte balance within nerve cells that travel through the nervous system and to the heart. (1) Potassium is found abundantly in fruits and vegetables. Some of the best sources from fruits and vegetables include: bananas, cantaloupe, sweet potatoes, white potatoes, beans, oranges, tomatoes, grapefruit, beet greens, avocados, kale, Swiss chard, and spinach. (1,3)

Researchers say this give us another reason to up our fruit and vegetable intake and will hopefully influence many women to eat at least 6-8 servings of fresh fruit and vegetables a day. (1)

How to get enough potassium

If you eat a variety of fruits and vegetables, getting enough potassium shouldn't pose a problem. Just eat a good amount of potassium rich foods a day such as those listed above and you'll likely hit your mark. You might also take note that a high protein diet was also found to lower the risk of stroke, which was reported in Medical News Today last year. Just keep in mind the study showed protein should not come from red meat and should ultimately come from fish or vegetarian sources. (1)

Overall, skip the mid-morning donut and reach for an apple or banana. Have a veggie-rich salad for lunch instead of a fast food meal. Doing this everyday could increase your potassium intake and possibly help you drop some weight at the same time.

Sources for this article include:

- (1) www.medicalnewstoday.com
- (2) www.foxnewstoday.com
- (3) whfoods.com

Image Source: www.flickr.com