



Tips for managing autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease (ADPKD)

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Living with ADPKD can feel overwhelming, but there are things you can do to help.

While there is no specific diet that has been proven to slow the development of cysts in people with this condition, diet and exercise help lower your blood pressure, which helps slow kidney damage. Additionally, reaching and maintaining a healthy weight has been shown to help slow the progression of ADPKD.^{1,2} Explore how diet, exercise and lifestyle choices can help you improve your overall health.

Diet

Keep sodium low

Eating foods with high salt content can increase blood pressure.^{3,4}

- Limit your sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams a day.¹³ Some individuals, including those with kidney disease, may need to stay under 1,500 mg/day.⁵ Check with your healthcare provider for specific recommendations.¹¹
- Avoid frozen and prepared foods, or choose options labeled with “low sodium.”^{3,4} However, use caution with low sodium foods and read labels carefully, as many low sodium products contain potassium chloride as a substitute, which could cause harm if on a restricted potassium diet.⁵
- Check labels carefully and watch for “sneaky” salt in canned soups and broths, bread, cereal, lunch meat and salad dressing.⁴
- Choose foods with a daily value of sodium below 10%.¹⁴
- Cook at home when possible, and replace salt with herbs, spices and other salt-free seasonings.^{3,4}

Reduce caffeine intake

Caffeine can act as a diuretic, causing you to lose more water.⁷

- Limit the amount of coffee and caffeinated tea you drink.⁷
- Avoid energy drinks.⁷

Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH)

The DASH eating plan shown on the next page is based on **2,000 calories a day**. The number of daily servings in a food group may vary from those listed, depending upon your caloric needs.

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Tips for switching to the DASH eating plan

- Change gradually. Add a vegetable or fruit serving at lunch and dinner.
- Use only half the butter or margarine you do now.
- If you have trouble digesting dairy products, try lactase enzyme pills or drops (available at drugstores and groceries), or buy lactose-free milk or milk with lactase enzyme added to it.
- Get added nutrients such as the B vitamins by choosing whole grain foods, including whole wheat bread or whole grain cereals.
- Spread out the servings. Have two servings of fruits and/or vegetables at each meal, or add fruits as snacks.
- Treat meat as one part of the meal, instead of the focus. Try casseroles, pasta and stir-fry dishes. Have two or more meatless meals a week.
- Use fruits or low-fat foods as desserts and snacks.

The DASH eating plan⁸

Food group	Daily servings
Grains	6-8
Vegetables	4-5
Fruits	4-5
Low-fat or fat-free dairy foods	2-3
Lean meats, poultry and fish	6 or less
Nuts, seeds, dry beans and peas	4-5 per week
Fats and oils	2-3
Sweets	5 or less per week
Sodium	2,300 mg*

*1,500 milligrams (mg) sodium lowers blood pressure even further than 2,300 mg sodium daily.

Check with your healthcare provider to see if DASH is right for you, and work with a registered dietitian to tailor a specific eating plan to your needs.⁷

Exercise

- Check with your healthcare provider before starting any new physical activity to ensure it is OK for you.⁴
- Moderate exercise such as walking can help lower blood pressure and lower stress levels, especially when done with a friend.³
- Aim for 30 minutes of moderate exercise on most days of the week. If this is too much at once, try breaking the activity into three 10-minute blocks.⁴
- Avoid activities where the kidneys could be hit accidentally, like contact sports, and anything that includes repetitive impact, such as horseback riding, football or soccer.⁹
- Be careful of strenuous exercise and extreme heat, as this can increase the risk of dehydration.⁹
- Incorporate physical activity into your daily routine⁴:
 - Take the stairs instead of the elevator
 - Take the dog for a walk rather than just letting them out in the yard
 - Get off the bus or subway a stop or two early
 - Choose a parking spot farther from your destination

Examples of moderate-level physical activities^{9,10}

Common chores

- Washing and waxing a car for 45-60 minutes
- Washing windows or floors for 45-60 minutes
- Gardening for 30-45 minutes
- Wheeling self in wheelchair for 30-40 minutes
- Pushing a stroller 1.5 miles in 30 minutes
- Raking leaves for 30 minutes
- Shoveling snow for 15 minutes
- Stair walking for 15 minutes

Sporting activities

- Playing volleyball for 45-60 minutes
- Playing touch football for 45 minutes
- Walking 2 miles in 30 minutes (1 mile in 15 minutes)
- Shooting baskets for 30 minutes
- Bicycling 5 miles in 30 minutes
- Dancing fast (social) for 30 minutes
- Performing water aerobics for 30 minutes
- Swimming laps for 20 minutes
- Playing basketball for 15-20 minutes
- Jumping rope for 15 minutes



Lifestyle

- Smoking can cause blood pressure to increase, so try to quit. Try an over-the-counter aid or ask your healthcare provider for advice.^{1,11}
- Try meditation, which can help relax the body and mind to reduce stress.¹²
- Drink plenty of water (2-3 liters per day) as recommended by your healthcare provider.¹¹
- Avoid or limit alcohol to no more than one drink per day.³
- Maintain a healthy weight to reduce risk for high blood pressure and slow the progression of ADPKD.^{6,7}

Body Mass Index (BMI)

BMI and waist circumference can help you determine if you are overweight. A BMI between 25 and 29.9 is considered overweight. A waist measurement more than 35 inches for women and 40 inches for men is considered high and can lead to higher blood pressure.^{1,2}

This chart shows BMI for various heights and weights.* To use the chart, find your height in the left-hand column. Move across to your body weight. The number at the top of the column is the BMI for your height and weight.

BMI	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Height (ft/in)	Body weight (lbs)										
4' 10"	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148
5' 0"	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158
5' 2"	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169
5' 4"	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180
5' 6"	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192
5' 8"	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203
5' 10"	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216
6' 0"	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228
6' 2"	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	241
6' 4"	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	254

*Weight is measured with underwear but no shoes.

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