Many renal patients require a low potassium diet to prevent hyperkalemia, or when the blood potassium level is higher the 5.0mg/dL. Potassium is widely distributed in foods. Milk, dairy products, fruits and vegetables are rich sources of potassium. Hypokalemia may result from the use of a potassium-losing diuretic or from dialysis. In these instances, potassium rich foods may be needed to be added to the diet.

**IF YOUR POTASSIUM BECOMES TOO HIGH, IT CAN CAUSE AN IRREGULAR HEARTBEAT OR A HEART ATTACK.**

**WHAT IS A SAFE LEVEL OF POTASSIUM IN MY BLOOD?**

If it is 3.5-5.0 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . You are in the SAFE zone
If it is 5.1-6.0 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . You are in the CAUTION zone
If it is higher than 6.0 . . . . . . . . . . . . You are in the DANGER zone

**HOW CAN I KEEP MY POTASSIUM LEVEL FROM GETTING TOO HIGH?**

- You should limit foods that are high in potassium
- Eat a variety of foods in moderation
- If you would like to eat some high potassium vegetables leach them before using. Leaching decreases the potassium in foods to about half the amount.
- Do not drink or use liquid from canned fruits and vegetables or the juices from cooked meat.
- Remember that almost all foods have some potassium. The size of the serving is very important. A large amount of a low potassium food can turn into a high-potassium food.
- Watch for hidden sources of potassium. Dried fruits are high in potassium. Canned fruits are lower.

**SALT SUBSTITUTES HAVE HIGH LEVELS OF POTASSIUM.**