

Can a Kidney Disease Chef Lose Weight?

By | Duane Sunwold

I'm a chronic kidney disease (CKD) patient that teaches in a culinary program. That means I'm around food ALL the time, plus the medication I was on caused me to gain an extra 70 pounds. I know managing your weight with kidney disease can be a challenge. Here are a few of the tips I used to help manage my weight.

Eating the right types of food was key to losing the weight. That meant I had to embrace my doctor's and dietitian's advice. I planned out my 3 meals and 3 snacks a day, and followed my dietitian's recommendations. Before I started eating, I would also portion out my food to control how much I was eating. On my good days, I would prepare meals in advance so when I was tired, I wouldn't cheat by eating fast food.



Before I changed my diet.



After I changed my diet

I also planned to use my good days to do some type of exercise. Always check with your medical team before starting an exercise routine. I would walk the dog, use the treadmill or even go swimming. I know my body does better if I keep it moving. For me, when I exercise, it decreases my aches and pains.

Fluid restrictions: ever hear of that? Yeah, I thought so. If I decreased the amount of salt I consumed, it was much easier to restrict my fluids. By preparing my own meals and reading food labels, I learned how much sodium was in a serving. I also learned not to use foods with hidden salt, like soy sauce, condiments, soup bases and canned soups; this helped me control how much water I drank.



Phosphorus is another mineral some kidney patients have to monitor. I only try to eat my phosphorus in naturally occurring foods, not foods that have been manufactured or drinks that contain phosphorus. I try to find low phosphorus foods to cook with. I braise cucumbers with dill, or cook apples with my vegetables in savory dishes.

Once I embraced my doctor's and dietitian's advice, I was able to start managing my weight. And I even felt better after 2 weeks.

Meal Plans