

KIDNEY VITALITY

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# The UK Kidney Supplement Guide

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An educational guide to choosing kidney-conscious  
supplements in the United Kingdom.

WRITTEN BY

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*Educational information only. Not a medical consultation or treatment for kidney disease.*

# Introduction

This guide is written for people in the United Kingdom who live with kidney disease, support someone who does, or want to take supplements more carefully because of family history or reduced kidney function. It is not a medical consultation. It is an educational starting point that helps you understand what is on a supplement label, why some ingredients matter more than others for kidney health, and what questions to ask before you buy.

Always discuss any new supplement with your GP, pharmacist or renal team before starting it — especially if you have advanced chronic kidney disease (CKD), are on dialysis, have had a transplant, are pregnant or breastfeeding, or are taking prescription medicines.

## 1. Understanding kidney disease and supplements

Healthy kidneys filter blood, balance minerals, regulate blood pressure, activate vitamin D, and remove waste through urine. When kidney function is reduced — whether mildly, moderately or severely — the kidneys are less able to remove excess minerals such as potassium, phosphate and magnesium, and less able to activate certain vitamins.

This is why an ordinary high-street multivitamin, even one marketed as ‘premium’ or ‘complete’, may not be the right choice for someone with kidney disease. Many ordinary multivitamins are formulated for the general adult population — who are assumed to have fully functioning kidneys — and therefore include ingredients in doses that are appropriate for healthy people but not necessarily for someone with CKD.

A kidney-conscious supplement is one that has been formulated with reduced kidney function in mind: limiting ingredients the kidneys must clear, avoiding mineral additives that can accumulate, and providing only the vitamins and nutrients most relevant to people with kidney disease.

**Kidney disease changes how your body handles vitamins and minerals. Supplement choices should reflect that.**

## 2. Potassium explained

Potassium is essential for nerve function, muscle contraction and a steady heartbeat. In healthy adults, the kidneys quietly remove any excess. In CKD — particularly stages 3b, 4, 5 and on dialysis — potassium is harder to clear and can build up in the blood (hyperkalaemia). High potassium is dangerous because it can disturb the heart rhythm.

Potassium hides in supplements as well as foods. It can appear as ‘potassium chloride’, ‘potassium citrate’, ‘potassium bicarbonate’ or simply ‘potassium’ on the ingredients panel. Some multivitamins contain added potassium without making this obvious on the front of the bottle.

- Read the supplement facts panel — not just the marketing copy on the front.
- If potassium is listed in any form, check with your renal team before taking it.

- Sports drinks, electrolyte powders and ‘rehydration’ supplements are common hidden sources.
- Salt substitutes (LoSalt, Solo) are largely potassium chloride — discuss before using.

### 3. Phosphate explained

Phosphate (or phosphorus) works with calcium to build bones. In CKD, the kidneys lose the ability to remove excess phosphate, and levels can rise quietly over years. High phosphate contributes to weak bones, itchy skin, calcium deposits in blood vessels, and cardiovascular complications.

Phosphate additives in food and supplements are absorbed much more efficiently than phosphate from natural foods. Watch for the European E-numbers E338 through E452, which are all phosphate-based additives commonly used as preservatives, stabilisers, anti-caking agents and acidity regulators in tablets and gummies.

- Avoid supplements that contain dicalcium phosphate, tricalcium phosphate or sodium phosphate as fillers.
- Check for E338, E339, E340, E341, E343, E450, E451, E452 in the ingredients.
- Gummy multivitamins frequently contain phosphate additives — always check the back of the pack.

### 4. Vitamin A and kidney health

Vitamin A is a fat-soluble vitamin. In healthy people, the body stores excess vitamin A in the liver. In CKD, vitamin A clearance is reduced and blood levels rise more easily — especially when supplements deliver megadoses of preformed vitamin A (retinol or retinyl palmitate).

Many ‘premium’ multivitamins contain 100% or more of the recommended daily intake of retinol. Stacking this on top of dietary intake — and reduced clearance — increases the risk of vitamin A toxicity in people with kidney disease.

- Prefer products with no megadose vitamin A.
- Beta-carotene (a precursor) is generally safer than retinol, because the body only converts what it needs.
- Avoid cod liver oil + multivitamin combinations without a clinician’s advice — these are easy to overdose.

### 5. How to read supplement labels

A few minutes spent reading the back of a supplement bottle will tell you more than the front of the bottle ever will. Use the steps below before adding any new supplement to your routine.

- Find the ‘Supplement Facts’ or ‘Nutritional Information’ panel — not the marketing copy.
- List every active ingredient and its dose, and compare each one to the reference nutrient intake (RNI).

- Note any ingredient over 100% RNI and check whether it is fat-soluble (A, D, E, K) — these accumulate.
- Scan the 'other ingredients' list for potassium, phosphate (E338–E452) and magnesium salts.
- Check the manufacturing claims: UK GMP, BRCGS, NSF — these indicate a regulated facility.
- Check who designed the product. Was a clinician involved? Is their GMC or registration number listed?

## 6. Common supplement mistakes

- Taking a 'complete' multivitamin that contains potassium, phosphate or megadose vitamin A.
- Layering several supplements without checking for duplicated ingredients (e.g. vitamin D in three products).
- Trusting front-of-pack marketing over the actual ingredient panel on the back.
- Buying from sellers with no UK address, no batch numbers and no manufacturing certification.
- Assuming 'natural' or 'plant-based' means kidney-safe. Many herbal products are not.
- Starting a new supplement before a routine blood test — making it impossible to interpret any changes.

## 7. Ingredients to avoid (or to discuss with your renal team)

- Potassium in any form (potassium chloride, citrate, bicarbonate).
- Phosphate additives — E338, E339, E340, E341, E343, E450, E451, E452.
- Megadose preformed vitamin A (retinol, retinyl palmitate above ~700 mcg).
- High-dose magnesium salts (magnesium oxide, magnesium citrate) in advanced CKD.
- Star fruit (carambola) extracts — neurotoxic in CKD.
- Aristolochic acid (some traditional herbal products) — nephrotoxic and banned in the UK.
- Nettle, juniper, parsley and uva ursi as concentrated extracts — discuss before use.
- Cranberry extract in stone-formers — discuss with a urologist if you have oxalate stones.

## 8. UK shopping checklist

Use this checklist whenever you compare two kidney-conscious supplements. A trustworthy UK supplement should be able to answer 'yes' to most of these without hesitation.

- Is the product manufactured in the UK?
- Is the manufacturing facility BRCGS- and/or NSF GMP-certified?
- Is there a named UK clinician behind the formulation, with a verifiable GMC or professional registration?
- Does the bottle clearly list every active ingredient and dose?

- Is the product free from added potassium and added phosphate?
- Does it avoid megadose preformed vitamin A?
- Is there a batch number, manufacture date and 'best before' on the bottle?
- Does the brand have a UK address and respond to email enquiries?
- Is there a clear refund and contact policy?

## 9. Questions to ask before buying a supplement

- Is this product appropriate for my stage of kidney disease?
- Does it contain anything my renal team has told me to avoid?
- Will it interact with my current prescription medicines?
- Is the dose of each ingredient sensible — or excessive?
- Who designed this product, and what are their clinical qualifications?
- How is the product tested between batches?
- Where is it manufactured, and under what certifications?
- Is there a clinician I can email if I have a question?

## 10. Kidney supplement review worksheet

Use this one-page worksheet to assess any supplement you are thinking of buying. Print it out, or copy it onto a notepad before your next renal appointment.

| Question                                           | Your notes |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Product name and brand                             |            |
| Where is it manufactured?                          |            |
| Manufacturing certifications (BRCGS / NSF / GMP)   |            |
| Named clinician / formulator (GMC number)          |            |
| Contains added potassium? (Y / N)                  |            |
| Contains added phosphate (E338–E452)? (Y / N)      |            |
| Vitamin A dose and form (retinol vs beta-carotene) |            |
| Magnesium dose and form                            |            |
| Any herbal ingredients of concern?                 |            |

|                                            |  |
|--------------------------------------------|--|
| Prescription medicines I am taking         |  |
| My most recent eGFR / CKD stage            |  |
| What my renal team said about this product |  |
| Decision: buy / discuss further / avoid    |  |

## About Kidney Vitality

Kidney Vitality is a daily multivitamin formulated in the United Kingdom around the kidney-conscious principles described in this guide. It was designed by Professor Mohammed Mahdi Althaf, a UK Consultant Nephrologist and Acute Physician (GMC 7216325), to give people with reduced kidney function a sensible everyday option that does not work against their kidneys.

Each capsule of Kidney Vitality is free from added potassium, free from added phosphate, free from added magnesium and free from megadose vitamin A. It is manufactured in the UK in a BRCGS- and NSF GMP-certified facility, with Halal certification. Kidney Vitality is a food supplement, not a medicine, and is not a treatment for kidney disease.

If, after reading this guide, you would like to know more, visit [kidneyvitality.co.uk](https://kidneyvitality.co.uk). Speak to your GP, pharmacist or renal team before starting any new supplement.

## Disclaimer

This guide is educational and does not replace personalised medical advice. It is not a diagnosis, prescription, treatment plan or substitute for consultation with a qualified clinician. Information was current at the time of writing (2026). Always discuss supplements with your renal team before starting them.

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