

# POTASSIUM - why we need more

by Tessa Jupp RN

Some years ago we looked at the amounts of potassium required, depending on blood type, weather conditions, health status.

A number of our members were part of this investigation and here is what we have found.

Several members a few years back, had reported that their doctors had found abnormal potassium levels which affected their health and heart in particular, so I have had this in mind.

Around 2000, there was a news article showing that locusts from a cold climate taken to a hot climate couldn't fly there and that autopsy revealed lower potassium levels in the cold climate locusts. So we wondered if this lower potassium level might correlate with our blood group research on hot and cold climate blood groups and muscle function.

Then I had a number of our members reporting repeated urinary tract infections that despite courses of antibiotics, kept returning. I started to think back to the treatments used in hospitals back in the 1960's when I trained as a nurse. We used Pot Cit for urinary infections, (which is potassium citrate). I found that people with urinary tract infections seemed to need 3 Slow K (potassium chloride) and they recovered within 2-3 days having no further reoccurrences if they got a bit more potassium.

On testing with blood groups, we found that cold climate blood groups (A & B) needed little extra Slow K in winter, but could need up to 5 or 6 per day during hot spells in summer. This has stopped the draining of energy during hot days, that makes summer unbearable for these people. Hot climate blood groups (O) prefer summer and only needed up to 3 Slow K on very hot days. On the other hand they don't like the cold of winter, possibly because their potassium levels are too high for cold weather.

I suspect that the levels of potassium has something to do with the amount of body heat produced. With lower levels of potassium, more internal body heat is produced, suiting colder climates but making us too hot in summer. Conversely, higher levels of potassium lessens internal body heat production suiting summer but allowing us to get cold in winter. (AB blood group doesn't seem worried with either extreme so

perhaps they can change their levels of potassium better). This is good news for A & B. They can cope better with summer with some extra Slow K.

Heat and hot weather reduces potassium levels, necessitating extra intake in summer for all blood groups, but particularly A & B.

Dr Niblett commented that when he worked in New Guinea some years ago, they used to put everyone on Slow K, including the doctors, because of the heat. So perhaps long hot baths and showers for

O's in winter would help to lower their potassium levels to enable them to cope with winter better.

Next I started thinking about the overheating of hot flushes in menopause. Was this due to low potassium too? We have found that most people plagued with hot flushes respond well to 3 - 4 Slow K in winter and will need more in summer - even up to 8/day. (Go by your symptoms.)

**Take EXTRA  
SLOW K or potassium  
water or broth  
if**

- \* the heat drains you of energy
- \* you have hot flushes
- \* you have a urinary infection
- \* you have oedema (swelling)

## CAUTIONS

1. If **kidney function is poor**, potassium builds up in the blood creating slowed heart beats, so close monitoring of potassium levels is vital.
2. Excess potassium causes **malabsorption of B12** so B12 injections may be required. (Good B12 levels are indicated by white moons that come  $\frac{1}{3}$  the way up the thumb nail.)
3. Low potassium levels lead to **muscle weakness** and **loss of energy reserves**.
4. Too much potassium can give you **palpitations** but so can too little - so be wary - happy medium.

**N.B Since Jan 2007 doctor's script is needed for Slow K. So food sources include bananas, potatoes, apple or lemon juices, nuts. To get more in your diet try Potassium Water or Broth.**

### Potassium Water

Cover the peel from 5 well washed potatoes with 3 cups of water. Bring to the boil then simmer for 20 mins. Drink a cupful twice a day - hot or cold.

### or Potassium Broth

Simmer 4 unpeeled, chopped potatoes, 3 chopped carrots, 4 chopped celery sticks in 4½ litres of water for 30 mins. Add a bunch of finely chopped parsley if desired. Puree and store in fridge. Drink a cupful twice a day - hot or cold.