Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

POTASSIUM SUPPLEMENTS

poe-tass-ee-um

What does it do?

Potassium supplements increase the amount of potassium in your body.

Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have heart, kidney, or bowel problems.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

How should you take it?

Take *potassium supplements* regularly as directed with food.
Slow release tablet: These can damage your oesophagus (food pipe). To avoid this, take it with a large glass of water. Swallow the tablet whole, do not crush or chew it. Sit or stand upright for at least 30 minutes after taking a dose.
Effervescent tablet: Dissolve in a glass of water before swallowing.

What if you forget a dose?

If it is nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take your next dose at the usual time. Otherwise, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Do not take two doses at the same time.

Can you take other medicines?

Some medicines available without a prescription may react with *potassium supplements* including:

- products that also contain potassium (e.g. Centrum®)

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Fluttering or uneven heartbeat, muscle cramps, or weakness (may be signs of a potassium problem) Symptoms of a peptic ulcer including: tummy pain, red or black bowel motions, vomit that looks like coffee grounds Trouble swallowing Indigestion or heartburn (new or getting worse)	Tell your doctor immediately
Stomach upset	Tell your doctor if troublesome

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:

- You may need blood tests while taking *potassium supplements* to check the amount of potassium in your blood.