



Hello and welcome to the Renal Diet Headquarters Podcast.

This is podcast number 34 and I'm your host Mathea Ford. I am the CEO of Renal Diet Headquarters. And I'm here to talk with you again about the things that are important to people with kidney failure.

You can find all the notes and the information that I talk about at www.renaldietHQ.com/034. You will find the transcript and everything else at that link.

Okay last week we talked about making healthier meals at home and creating a good grocery list that way you have a healthier set of foods to start with. So we also talked about making a casserole from scratch and I gave you my recipe. And some different options and that can be a great fall back meal for you so if you have some of those items we talked about at the grocery list you can use them to make your casserole and you'll be good.

This week we're talking about cleaning out your kitchen or pantry cupboards. What types of foods you should keep and for how long. It's important to do some good spring or fall cleaning to make sure you aren't keeping the past it's prime.

Spices especially can get kind of yucky after six months to year; they can go bad or not go bad but just not have as much flavor. And I'm going to talk to you about also about making good snacks to take along with you to dialysis or other trips that you may go on. So you have something healthy there with you. So that's what this week's podcast is going to be about. So let's get started.

Have you ever looked at the foods in your cupboard and thought, I wonder when I got that? And then you take out the package and looked at the dates only to realize it was a couple years ago that it went bad. That's never happened to me. Okay well maybe once or twice like maybe once or twice a year. But I'm going to go over some main foods to look at and how long to keep them. But it's really important that you kind of keep your food organized and make sure that you're not using things that are already past their expiration date, especially if there're couple years past their expiration date.

So in your cupboards you want to look at some items that you can really process you know make sure that they're not being used after their prime. These times that I'm going to mention to you are generally for maintaining the best food quality and a range of time you know could be given to talk about the age of the product when purchased. How long it's been opened. Look at your labels carefully; they contain important storage information and the recommended use by dates. But it does matter if you've opened something or not. So keep that in mind.

To start with let's talk about some dry goods. Maybe baking products. Baking powder you can keep for 12 to 18 months or the expiration date on the container. And store it tightly covered in a dry place. Make sure that you don't use wet utensils when you're measuring things to get it out. And to test it for freshness you can mix 1 teaspoon of the baking powder with 1/3 cup of hot water and if it foams up vigorously it still has the rising power that you need for it to be effective in a recipe. Baking soda same thing 12 to 18 months or the expiration date. Keep it covered, don't leave it open and to test it for freshness place one and a half teaspoons in a small bowl and add a tablespoon of vinegar and if it fizzes then it will still help to leaven a food, if it doesn't fizz use it as an odor catcher in your refrigerator. So that's how you can test it. And these tips are from the Nebraska Extension. I want to remember to say thank you to them for having their information on their website and the [Nebraska Lincoln University Nebraska Extension service](#).

Okay, shortening 3 to 8 months once it's been opened, 8 to 12 months if it's not opened yet. So you want to keep it covered; you want make sure that you're not using something that's already gone rancid or been in there too long. We use to keep ours forever and I know a lot of people probably don't even necessarily use shortening as much because it has so much trans-fat in it. But store it in a closed container in a dark place. And make sure that you smell it before you use it in a recipe to see if it's gone rancid. Because it can get rancid if it's used past the expiration date. Or past that 3 to 8 months if you've opened it.

For canned foods, you really should eat them within 1 to 2 years of processing. They have quality used by dates on them usually and you should be able to get cans that are recent and not expired or whatever. But you can call a company's toll free number if it just has like a code on it. It doesn't necessarily have a date on. It just has some sort of code you call the company and ask them like what's the expiration of date or when it was processed. So remember 1 to 2 years after it's processed. And don't refrigerate your open canned food in their cans. So you want to transfer that to a storage container and I've seen some products that are made to like need a lid for a canned that's been opened and it's just not recommended to store them in the container once you've opened it. Just take it out of there put it in like a small glass container. Or a small plastic container and store it in your refrigerator in that way you can use some masking tape on top and cover just a little label on it to say what it is. And the date you put in the fridge. Labeling I am going to talk about in a little bit is a very important part of making sure that you have good food.

Popcorn other than popcorn for the microwave is stored in an airtight container. And don't store your popcorn in the refrigerator. It makes it dry out and it does not pop as well and I know that even make is the case with microwave popcorn. The water inside the popcorn kernel that expands is... makes it dehydrated when you put in the refrigerator. So store it in a clean dry place in the cabinet and it can last up to two years.

Spices and herbs. About one year for herbs or ground spices and two years for the whole spices. So if you buy whole black pepper, you can keep that for two years. But everything else you need to... herbs that are ground already you need to just about year. You want to watch for the color loss and for opened package container. You just want to hold it for just about a year. Don't store it above your stove, which seems like where everybody's got their racks at. But don't store it near your stove. Or near an area where it's going to experience a lot of hot and then cold activity. Use your dry spoon to remove the herbs or spices. And don't sprinkle directly into a container... into like a steaming hot pot because that's going to have steam evaporating and that's going to get into your herb jar.

You can refrigerate paprika, chili powder and red pepper for the best color retention. Especially in summer. So if your herbs and spices are stored in the refrigerator make sure you have them closed well. And you can get that condensation if it's stored in a refrigerator and humid kitchen, so just be careful.

Give your herbs the sniff test, to tell if they're any good. Depending on the storage and the quality of the herb, some are going to last a little longer than others. But to check if a ground spice is potent, you can smell it. If aroma is immediately it should still work for your foods. For whole item such as a clove or a cinnamon stick. Break it or scrape it before you smell it. Do not smell pepper, chili powder they can irritate your nose; make you sneeze.

For herbs, crush a small amount in your hand and smell it, if it is still gives you that scent. Then you're fine, if there's no smell or it kind of smells funny then get rid of it. I know spices are expensive and... But really it's not going to do you any good. So when you buy the new one make sure you smell it to see what it smells like so you know what a fresh herb smells like for that particular herb.

White flour is good for about 6 to 12 months. You can store in a cool dry place in an airtight container or a freezer bag to preserve the flour's moisture content. For longer storage you can keep it in the refrigerator in an airtight container. All-purpose and bread flour keep up to two years at 40°F in your refrigerator according to the Wheat Food's Council. They can be stored indefinitely in the freezer, obviously recommend putting them in a freezer bag and then storing them in a freezer for you for long-term. And if measuring flour from a refrigerator or frozen flour. Allow your measured portions to come to room temperature before using it in

a baked good. Remove the flour for your recipe a few hours before use so it doesn't affect the other ingredients. So it's not too cold or whatever.

And if you're using whole-wheat flour 1 to 3 months at room temperature, refrigerate your whole-wheat flour if you want to keep it longer. So keep it in the refrigerator and it'll keep up to 12 months in the freezer. And then if you're again measuring it allowed to come to room temperature before you use it in your recipe. If you want to buy an airtight container for your white or whole-wheat flour, you need to buy... for about a pound of flour you need to buy something that's about 4 cups for 5 pounds of flour, it has about 20 cups. So if you're buying a container and then 10 pounds of flour you want to make sure it has about 40 cups capacity. And so if a container doesn't give you the number cups it will hold then you can look at it and if it's 8 fluid ounces that's going to be about a cup. A pint is about 2 cups a gallon is 16 cups. So if you buy a gallon it should hold up to a little less than 5 pounds of flour. Before purchasing a container, figure out where you're going to store the flour to determine the restrictions for that. And if it'll fit on the shelves in your kitchen, because that's one of the things that bugs me in my kitchen as we don't have adjustable shelves. And it's hard to fit some of the boxes into the cabinets sometimes. And make sure your container is easy to use, when you need to measure out the ingredients.

Okay, moving on. If you are using honey, it's good for about 12 months. Honey has a natural ability to... it has its own kind of natural antibacterial properties. Tends to be best at room temperature. It'll crystallize more rapidly in the refrigerator. And if you need to revitalize crystallized honey, you can place the jar in warm water and stir the honey until the crystals dissolve.

Brown sugar 4 to 6 months for maximum flavor. It's very important to store brown sugar in an airtight container because it does have moisture in it and it will become hard and that's not what you want. Either store it in its original plastic bag tightly closed. Or transfer to an airtight container or heavy moisture proof plastic bags such as a freezer bag. What I do is I always want to open it put in the freezer bag and then I close the brown sugar bag and I get all the air out of the freezer bag too. To soften it up if you need too. You can place the brown sugar and a microwave safe container and cover it loosely with the clean white wet but not dripping wet paper towel. You microwave on high and check about every 30 seconds when the sugar cools it will become hard again. The sugar will be very hot. And if you have more time place the brown sugar in a plastic container and cover with plastic wrap or foil. Place the dampened, not dripping wet paper towel on top of the plastic wrapper foil. And then sealed tightly and remove the paper towel after the sugar has absorbed the moisture, which is about two days. So you can do either those to soften brown sugar.

White granulated sugar. Is about two years and to use the hardened white sugar. If it absorbs moisture it becomes very hard. So you can put a hard sugar and a sturdy food bag and pound with a hammer. Meat pounder or flat side of a meat mallet, or

like your rubber mallet. Smash up smaller pieces with the mortar and pesto. Or break up some in the spice grinder. And if you want to buy a sugar storage container. 1 pound of sugar is about two and a fourth cups; 5 pounds of sugar is about 11 ½ cups. So if you're going to get 5 pounds of sugar you probably need to get a gallon container. Again that's about 16 cups and most the time you're bigger bag of sugar is 4 pounds. So that's going to be somewhere in the range of eight to nine cups of sugar. But make sure again that you know that it's gonna fit where you gonna store it.

Vegetable oil is 1 to 6 months once you've opened it. And 6 to 12 months if it's not been opened. It does depend on the type of oil and some of them recommend up to two years that's fine. Just read your information on that package if it has it. Store it in a cool dark place because fat... you know oil does become rancid at times. Walnut, hazelnut, sesame and almond oil have a shorter storage life. And oil that's gone rancid develops an undesirable taste or odor so make sure you smell it first. And you can prolong the life of oils by storing them in the refrigerator. Some oils like olive oil become cloudy in the refrigerator but clear up after sitting at room temperature.

Vinegar... Something we use a lot of vinegar. Two years unopened one year opened. Keep your vinegar tightly covered and because it's acidic it could be a really long time that you can keep it, it doesn't necessarily just have the one-year. And then storage depends on the type of vinegar. But you can call the 1800 number on the package and ask them. If you're looking through overall about how to do better in the future with package foods and not have to throw away so much. If there's something that you tossed part of, like your sugar. If you've had it... It's really hard and. Buy a smaller container next time even though maybe more expensive to only buy 2 pounds of sugar or a pound sugar. It's better to not throw half of it away. Keep a permanent marker pen in your kitchen and put the date month and year that you purchased the food on the container and you can do that also would like a piece of masking tape on your containers in the fridge. But dating things really helps you to know how long it's been in there.

When in doubt about storage times call a company, there should be a number on the label or you can write to an address on label or go to website and put submit on the contact form. You want to look for production code last, if there's no used by; there's no expiration date on there; best if used by type thing. You want to call that number and tell them the code. And they should be able to help you.

And you want to, with your foods... you want to do what's called first in first out. And that means when you purchase something and it has a longer expiration date then you want to put that behind the foods that you have already opened. So that you're not using the newer stuff first. And I think about this a lot with milk. For example in my family we go through a lot of milk and we usually have two cartons of milk two gallons of milk at the house at any time. And one of them when I buy them, I'll usually buy them with the longest day that I can find. But if there's maybe one with

the longer date then I'll make sure and put the one with the longer date behind the other milk so that the kids use the regular milk container first. The one with the less time. So it's used.

Read your labels carefully and make sure, you know a lot of them will give you recommendations for how to store foods. And so you want to look... something that's kind of interesting is like for example on syrup. My in-law stores it in the refrigerator but on the label it does not say you have to store it in the refrigerator. And we go through syrup pretty much quickly in our house. So I like syrup at room temperature, so instead of have to remember to get it out of refrigerator we just leave it out but there is no... It's something that people... Just get in the habits of storing foods a certain way.

Alright so now that we've talked about ways to store foods at home and kind of how long to keep them. And you're making this great grocery list. So let's talk about some good snacks that you can make take along with you. And back to that if you make something ahead of time, label it, keep, it in the cooler if it needs to be kept in a cooler; you can buy a little small cooler and take it along with you.

But I want to start with talking about sandwiches cause I think sandwiches make a really good snack. And then another thing that makes a really good snack is like crackers you can buy some Triscuits. You can buy the reduced fat; you can buy the low sodium Triscuits. You can have crackers and you can add peanut butter with those. You can do graham crackers and have some type of celery with peanut butter. Those make really good snacks and they give you a little bit of protein to help you feel full longer. But they're also not overdone with the carbohydrate if you're diabetic. So check out... you need to try to... if you're getting bored with the same old snacks and the same old sandwiches. Some ways to experiment might be to make sure that you're using... if you can still use the whole grains then use whole-grain bread. You're limited in your phosphorus or potassium, then you need to use white bread. But if you can, still use you're your whole grain breads. And look at the food label. If it has... try to find one with a little bit more fiber in it. And look at those labels and look at those ingredients and see how much phosphoric acid or whatever they've put into it or potassium phosphate or whatever. Make sure you are looking at the food labels so that you know that it has things like oatmeal... if it's oatmeal bread, it should have oatmeal in the first couple ingredients. Choose them with a higher fiber content even if it is just plain white bread. Just try to find one with a higher fiber content that will help you control your blood sugars.

Try different fillings so instead of making like a chicken salad sandwich always with mayonnaise. Although you can buy the lower fat mayonnaise. What you probably want to do is try low fat plain yogurt. And we talked about yesterday or last week having the plain yogurt on there. On your list and it's a good thing to have along with you. You can also take yogurt along with you as a snack. Makes an excellent snack.

Carrots and celery and a little bit ranch dressing make good snack as well. But instead of always doing that, do a little fat plain yogurt to add some crunch add a little bit of celery; add a little bit of walnuts; add a little bit grapes to your chicken salad. And I love to put a little bit of vinegar and a little bit of oil on my sandwich if I am like subway or whatever and I'm getting just meat and cheese. And I'll put lettuce, cucumbers and oil and vinegar.

Add some herbs or spices. So try some of those. Like dill or cumin to your sandwich. Just to see how it taste. Instead of a traditional peanut butter jelly sandwich try peanut butter with sliced bananas or sliced apples. Use your sandwich spreads. Go on and use a little a less mayonnaise, margarine, butter and use the low-fat plain yogurt. Use hummus, use mustard as is spread and light dressing. Add vegetables to like spinach or arugula, zucchini, cucumbers, green peppers, onions. Try pineapples, try bananas for snacks.

Go lean with the protein. Choose the lean proteins like beef, ham, or turkey. Be sure you're choosing the lower fat ones and lower sodium. If you have to choose between sodium and fat you should certainly choose lower sodium. And then make sure that you're packing them in an insulated tote, ice packed, gel pack or whatever.

Bottled water, you can take bottles of water and fill in like three quarters of the way full of water; freeze them and those make nice ice packs as well. So you don't always have to pay ice packs. Don't freeze sandwiches with mayonnaise lettuce or tomatoes. Add them right before hand, so it just comes to keep then on the side. And make sure you add them when you reach your destination and when you get ready to eat them. You may even just take all the pieces and just add it, mix it together when you get there. Like have your chicken salad already mixed and have your couple pieces of bread but keep them separate so doesn't get soggy and that makes for a great sandwich.

So don't forget to take a nice cooler with you and make it easy to carry along your items.

Thank you, I appreciate you listening this week and I appreciate you listening every week and I enjoyed talking to you and I want to hear notes about what you want to hear more about. So send me a messages at podcastatrenaldiethq.com. I hope that this podcast is helpful to you and I hope you're learning something. I know I learn something new every week when I talk to you about the stuff, and when I get prepared for the time that I'm going to spend with you. I learned so much just doing my prep work.

So that's it for this week. Next week I'm going to talk about ways to lower sodium in your meals, by using herbs and spices more often. And how to use labels to see what you're eating. So we're going to talk about like instead of salt use this for these types

of foods. And I hope that that will help you to have some ideas on what to do. And I will talk to you then please don't forget to send me a note and I appreciate it and thank you very much.