Egg Whites May Help Lower Phosphorus
Jody A. Charnow
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*Phosphorus levels declined in dialysis patients who ate egg whites instead of meat for one meal a day.*

GRAPEVINE, TEX.—Substituting egg whites for meat may help dialysis patients control phosphorus, according to a small study.

Lynn M. Taylor, MS, RD, and Ted Markewich, BA, of DaVita Carroll County Dialysis in suburban Maryland enrolled six men and seven women (mean age 62 years) with serum phosphorus levels higher than 3.9 mg/dL. The first four weeks of the study (baseline) consisted of data collection. Then, for one meal per day over the following six weeks, patients substituted eight ounces of pasteurized liquid egg whites for meat. The eight ounces of egg whites contained 24 grams of protein and 28 mg of phosphorus.

Twelve patients (92%) had a decrease in phosphorus, the researchers reported here at the National Kidney Foundation’s 2008 Spring Clinical Meetings. Mean phosphorus levels declined significantly from 5.54 mg/dL at baseline to 4.63 mg/dL during the study. Mean patient-reported phosphorus intake also declined significantly, from 692 to 572 mg/day.

The diet did not affect albumin levels, which remained stable at a mean of about 4 mg/dL. Phosphorus binder intake also remained constant; the mean number of pills taken by patients was 6.63 at baseline and 6.42 during the study.

“Pasteurized liquid egg whites are an effective component of the renal diet for lowering serum phosphorus while maintaining the albumin level,” the authors concluded.

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