

# Albumin

## A Guide for Malnutrition

**Albumin:** A protein found in your blood.

- It is important for:
- Building muscle
  - Healing wounds
  - Fighting infections
  - Balancing water in your body



## What happens if my albumin is low?

Low albumin is connected to more infections, hospitalizations, and even death. With low albumin you may also experience:

- Swelling
- Lower quality of life
- Difficulty healing from surgery or wounds
- Anemia
- Heart failure
- Difficulty with fluid removal

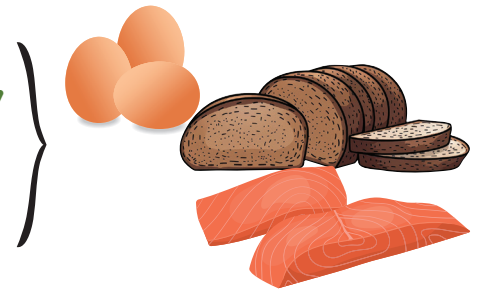
People on dialysis who keep their albumin levels at or above 4.0 have lower risk of these negative events.

# Why is my *albumin* low?

- Low appetite
- Infections and illnesses
- Not eating enough protein
- Losing protein during dialysis
- Inflammation
- Poor dental health
- Not getting enough dialysis
- Fullness from PD exchanges

# How can I raise my *albumin*?

- 1 Talk to your dietitian!
- 2 Eat high protein foods such as **lean meats, fish, nuts, eggs, dairy products, tofu, beans, whole grain carbohydrates** in every meal
- 3 Add snacks or nutritional supplements
- 4 Monitor your fluid balance
- 5 Talk to your dietitian about additional treatments, provided during your dialysis session such as **IDPN and IPN**



**Work with your registered dietitian to set a new goal and action item.**

I want to improve my albumin because \_\_\_\_\_ OR Improving my albumin will help me \_\_\_\_\_ (feel better, have more energy, feel stronger)

I will achieve improved albumin by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(eating more protein, consistently eating my protein bar...)