

FLUID

FACTS AND GUIDELINES FOR THE PERSON ON DIALYSIS

For a person on dialysis, fluid is usually restricted or limited. One job of healthy kidneys is to remove excess fluid from the body. When your kidneys are not working properly, dialysis can remove some of the fluid, but you will also need to drink or eat less fluid. Having “too much” fluid can cause problems, some of which are serious. It is very important for you to follow the fluid restrictions your health care team prescribes for you.

Symptoms of too much fluid:

Some of the problems that you could experience from gaining too much fluid are:

- Swelling in your ankles and feet called edema (a-dee-ma)
- Weakened heart muscle, and eventually heart failure caused from too much fluid stretching the heart muscle
- Shortness of breath caused from too much fluid around the lungs
- High blood pressure
- Sudden drop in blood pressure causing you to feel faint or dizzy
- Chest pain
- Cramping during dialysis
- Headaches, nausea and overall “bad” feeling during and after your treatment
- If you have continuous high fluid gains, you may be required to stay longer or come back for an extra treatment

How do I know if I have too much fluid?

Any of the symptoms can indicate you have gained too much fluid. For a person on dialysis, fluid is measured by weight gain between dialysis treatments. The members of your health care team (your doctor, nurse, tech, and dietitian) will monitor your weight gains each time you come for a treatment. They will weigh you and determine a “Dry Weight,” which is your weight without extra fluid. This is used as your target weight after fluid has been removed. In dialysis, weight is often measured in kilograms (kg). Each kg equals 2.2 lbs.

How much fluid can I have?

Limit your fluid intake to 4 cups per day. Your daily fluid limits depend on how much urine you make. If you do not make urine then you need to strictly limit your fluid intake. Your health care team will determine your fluid allowance and will give you guidelines to follow.

4 cups = 1 quart = 1 liter =

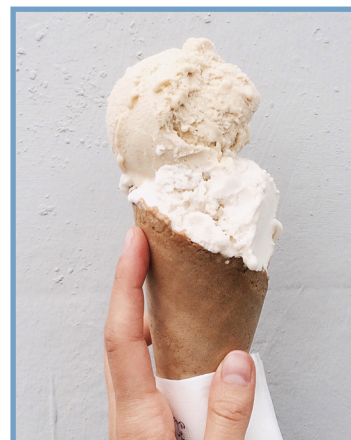
**Weight Gain:
1 Kilogram
= 2.2 pounds**



It is important not to gain more than 2 kg (4.4 lbs) between each treatment. One kg weight gain would equal 32 oz. (the same as 4 cups or 1 quart) of liquid consumed per day. 16 oz. (the same as 2 cups or a pint) of retained fluid will equal one pound of weight gain. We sometimes forget what we eat or drink throughout the day, so measuring your fluid intake will make this easier to track.

WHAT COUNTS AS FLUID?

- Anything that you drink or anything that melts at room temperature
- Examples: coffee, water, sodas, milk, juice, smoothies, shakes, soup, ice cream, pudding, jello, custard, lemonade



HOW CAN I CONTROL MY FLUID INTAKE?

1. Avoid salt and salty foods. Salt can make you thirsty and can cause your body to retain fluid.



2. Measure all fluid with standard measuring cups.
3. Chew sugar-free gum.
4. Take medications with applesauce instead of liquid.
5. Suck on sugar-free hard candy, especially sour candy.
6. Prepare a spray bottle with water and lemon juice or cherry juice and use to lightly spray your mouth.
7. If you are diabetic, controlling your blood sugar is important.

8. Rinse your mouth with cold mouthwash (don't swallow)!
9. Stay out of the heat in the summer time.
10. Use a smaller glass with meals.
11. Brush your teeth more often.
12. A frozen lemon slice or a couple of frozen grapes (4 or less) can take the edge off your thirst.
13. Keep daily fluid/food diary.
14. Follow the fluid allowance that has been prescribed for you and do not hesitate to ask for help.
15. Keep track of what you drink in a day. Start with an empty liter-sized bottle or a quart jar. Each time you drink, pour the same amount that you just drank into the bottle. When that bottle is full, you have used your fluid allowance for the day.

SPEAK WITH YOUR DIETITIAN ABOUT YOUR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS.