

Controlling fluid intake

Why do I need to limit fluid?

Healthy kidneys remove extra fluid from the body. When the kidneys fail, dialysis can remove some of this fluid. But you also need to drink or eat less fluid.

My fluid allowance is _____ mL per day

What happens if I have too much fluid?

Too much fluid can cause:

- Swollen hands, face, feet and legs
- Increased blood pressure and more work for the heart. This can lead to a fast heartbeat
- Difficulty breathing and shortness of breath (due to fluid in your lungs)
- Nausea, headaches and muscle cramps
- After dialysis, low blood pressure and feeling “washed out”
- If you are on peritoneal dialysis (PD), too much fluid requires the use of stronger bags containing more glucose (sugar). Over time this will reduce the efficiency of the peritoneum and may lessen your term on PD. Extra glucose contains energy (kJ) which can also lead to unwanted weight gain.

Note: There is a difference between fluid weight and body weight (muscles, bones, body fat). Your body is 60-70% fluid. Weight changes due to fluid occur quickly, over a period of days. Changes in body weight occur more slowly, over weeks or months.

What should I count as fluid?

Fluid includes **all drinks** and any food that is **liquid at room temperature**:

- Water, soft drink, cordial, fruit juice
- Tea, coffee
- Milk, milkshakes, thick shakes
- Ice, iceblocks
- Soup
- Gravy, sauces
- Custard, ice-cream, yoghurt, cream, jelly
- Alcohol

Some foods count as fluids, too. For example:

- Porridge
- Rice, pasta, noodles
- Fruit

These foods contain large amounts of fluids. If you eat **large** serves of these foods, count these as part of your allowance.



What is the fluid content of foods?

- 1 ice cube = 15mL
- 1 tablespoon = 20mL
- 1 metric cup = 250mL (8oz)
- 1 litre = 1000mL = 1 kg in fluid weight

Note: Use measuring cups and jugs to **accurately** measure your fluid intake.

Fluid content of common foods

Food	Volume
½ cup jelly or custard	100mL
Mug of tea or coffee	300mL
1 can of soft drink	375mL
200g tub yoghurt	160mL
2 scoops of ice cream	40mL
1 cup cooked porridge	160mL
1 cup cooked rice or pasta	100mL
1 piece of fruit (apple)	80mL
½ cup melon	100mL
2 Tbsp gravy/sauce	40mL

How much fluid can I have?

- How much fluid you can have differs from person to person depending on dialysis, urine output and kidney function. Your fluid allowance may also change over time.
- You need some extra fluid (500 - 700mL) due to loss through the lungs and skin - even more in hot weather.
- Aim for a weight gain of around **1.5 kg** between each dialysis.

Hints for your fluid control

- Spread your fluid allowance over the day - don't drink it all at once!
- Stay cool by using a moist face washer from the fridge or freezer. Try and stay out of the heat.
- Drink from small cups rather than large, fill cups ½ full.
- Freeze some of your fluid allowance. Ice or iceblocks, sucked slowly, are better at quenching thirst
- **Limit salt and salty foods as these make you thirsty.** Foods high in salt include processed meats, tinned foods, sauces, gravy, most take away foods.
- **Choose foods low in salt** - fruit, fresh vegetables, unprocessed meats, and “low salt” or “no added salt” foods. Look for sodium content **less than 120 mg per 100g serve** on the nutrition panel. Do **not** add salt at the table or in cooking.
- Try sucking mints, peppermints, a slice of lemon or chewing gum.
- Brush your teeth to freshen your mouth.
- Keep lips moist by using lip balm.

Dietitian: _____

Phone number: _____



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