

Restricting Fluid Intake

You may have been informed by your medical team that you need to restrict the amount of fluids you drink in a day. A buildup of fluids in the body could be because of:

- Heart failure, where the heart is unable to pump enough blood around the body efficiently
- Kidney disease, where the kidneys are not producing enough urine
- Liver disease, where the liver does not work well and fluid builds up in the abdomen, known as ascites

If you are taking too much fluids, you may experience:

Shortness of breath



Swollen arms and legs



Increased blood pressure



Sudden and significant weight gain



Check with your medical team regarding your daily fluid target periodically as it may change over time

What is a Fluid?

Fluids include all foods and drinks that are liquid at room temperature, such as:

- Water and ice
- Coffee, tea, milk, milo, fruit juice, alcohol and other beverages
- Desserts such as ice cream, pudding, jelly, red bean soup
- Soup, gravy and sauces
- Watery porridge and oats
- Oral Nutrition Supplements e.g. Ensure, Glucerna and Nepro HP etc

Everyday fluids and their volume



1 teaspoon
5ml



1 rice spoon
10ml



1 tablespoon
15ml



1 soup spoon
30ml



1 cup
250ml



1 small soup bowl
100ml



1 scoop ice cream
50ml



1 ice cube
20ml



1 coffeeshop glass mug
300ml



1 takeaway drink bag
300ml



1 large plastic drink cup
500ml

The above pictorial only serves as a guide. It is best if you can measure your cups and bowls at home, as they may differ in volume.

Tips for Successful Fluid Control

1. Measure your fluids

- Use measuring cups to measure your fluid intake
- Drink from smaller cups
- Try to split the fluid allowance into 2 bottles, one for drinking and one to take with medications
- Fill up a bottle of water and use this to keep track of your fluid intake. If you drink or eat something liquid, pour the same amount out of this bottle.



2. Managing your thirst

- Suck on unsweetened candy or add lemon slices to your water to help produce more saliva
- Suck on an ice cube slowly as it can help to quench thirst
- Freeze 1-2 serves of cut fruit (e.g. strawberries, kiwi, apple) and consume to relieve thirst during hot days
- Rinse your mouth with water but do not swallow
- Spread out your fluid intake throughout the day



3. Lower sodium intake

- Avoid high sodium snacks (e.g. pickles, sour plum) and salt-containing sweets
- Add lesser or no salt or sauces when cooking and eating your meals
- Limit soups and gravies as too much sodium makes you thirsty, making it harder to keep to your fluid target



Contributed by Nutrition & Dietetics Service, Allied Health Services

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