



Patient Education

FLUID MANAGEMENT FOR PATIENTS RECEIVING DIALYSIS

Fluid management in dialysis patients is important to prevent excessive fluid retention in the body. ***Every patient has a different daily allowance for fluid.***

HOW MUCH FLUID CAN YOU AS A PATIENT HAVE EACH DAY?

Fluid allowance is usually calculated as *replacing the urine excretion in the previous 24 hours* and then *adding 500 ml* for everyday losses e.g. excreted 200ml urine + 500 ml = 700ml each day.

Measure the volume of urine excretion monthly for a day to determine if you are excreting more or less urine. This will determine if you can drink more or less fluid.

SOURCES OF FLUIDS

Fluid is found in all foods. Foods that are liquid at room temperature should be counted as part of daily fluid intake.

Examples: water, tea, coffee, cold drink, alcohol, soup, gravy, sauces, custard, jelly, milk pudding, ice cream, ice, suckers, cream, yoghurt. Some fruit such as watermelon, oranges, grapes, apples and tomatoes also have a high fluid content.

TIPS TO HELP YOU TO MANAGE YOUR FLUID INTAKE:

- Measure out the day's ratio of fluid, so that you can see how much is left.
- Distribute the intake over the whole day.
- Try to get the most nutrition from your allowed liquids. Give up tea, coffee, soft drinks and other such beverages and rather concentrate on more nourishing foods and drinks.
- Another reason not to overdo fluids is that they may contain sodium, potassium, phosphorus, excess fat or sugar.
- Think before you drink – are you really thirsty? If you drink to be sociable, then cut back before and after the occasion.
- Try eating allowed fruits and vegetables ice cold between meals.
- Use sour hard candies (like lemon drops) and chewing gum to moisten your mouth. Suck on a lime or lemon.
- Rinse your mouth with cold water, but do not swallow it.
- Brush your teeth regularly.
- Keep a bottle of mouthwash in your refrigerator and instead of drinking something, rinse your mouth to feel refreshed.
- Take medication with mealtime liquids if possible.
- You may be less thirsty the day after dialysis. Try taking less fluid then and save some for the following day.
- Measure ice allotment for the day and store in a special container in your freezer. Most people find ice more satisfying than the same amount of water. When making ice cubes, add some lemon juice or mint. Drink cold liquids in place of hot liquids. Stay cool.
- Freeze allowed fruit juices in ice cube trays to reduce amount taken. They make nice treats.
- Use very small cups and glasses for beverages and other liquids. *Sip, do not gulp.*
- Try to keep yourself as active as possible. When you are idle, you may become preoccupied with a desire for liquids.
- The less salt (sodium) you eat, the less thirsty you will be. Too much salt causes fluid retention, heart failure and pulmonary oedema.
- Restrict to ½ teaspoon of salt per day for cooking.
- Take the salt-shaker off the table.
- Read the labels on products carefully.
- Avoid salty foods like chips, processed spreads, salty crackers, instant pasta or rice dishes (boxed mixes), biltong, etc.
- Avoid seasonings that may have salt in them e.g. Aromat, onion salt, garlic salt, etc.
- If your doctor has approved alcohol (e.g. special occasions) avoid high potassium cocktails such as Bloody Marys, screwdrivers, Pina coladas, wine and beer. Cocktails should rather be mixed with club soda, ginger ale, tonic or cola free soft drinks.
- Use whipped cream instead of ice cream on desserts if you want to decrease fluid intake.
- When eating out, order a small beverage and remember to count it as part of the fluid allowance. Push your glass or cup away from your plate when you are finished to avoid refills.
- Beverages that are high in sugar and caffeine can make you extremely thirsty and lead to excess fluid intake. Don't have more than 2 cups of coffee daily and rather have sodas low in calories and caffeine e.g. diet Sprite. etc.