

# Controlling Fluid:



Your kidneys are not removing fluid as well as they did previously. It is very important for you to limit your fluid intake so that you will not gain too much weight between treatments. There are many things you cannot control on dialysis. However, limiting the amount of fluid you drink is one way you can take control of your disease.



## How Fluid Affects Your Heart

Your heart is a muscle that pumps blood filled with oxygen to other parts of your body. If you have too much fluid in your body between dialysis treatments, your blood pressure increases, and your heart has to work harder. The more fluid builds up between treatments, the more we have to remove at dialysis. The more fluid we have to remove, the harder it is on your heart. Over time, rapid fluid removal makes the heart scarred and stiff, and it doesn't work as well.

If you drink less fluid between treatments, and if we take the fluid off more slowly during your treatments, your heart will stay more healthy. Slow fluid removal is much easier on the heart. That's why many dialysis specialists now say that all hemodialysis treatments should be at least 4 hours long.

## What Can I Do?

1. Always measure what you drink. A good rule of thumb is to limit your fluid to the amount you urinate per day plus 1 liter.
2. Some people fill a 1 liter bottle with water, and pour out what they drink during the day. When it is empty, you know you have reached your safe limit.
3. Weigh yourself every day about the same time of the day.
4. Know your dry weight. Dry weight is the weight you should be when there is no extra fluid in your body.
5. Count fluid in your food. Many foods, like fruit, are made up of fluid. Food also counts as fluid if it melts at room temperature.
6. Do not add salt to your food as the increased salt intake tends to increase your thirst. Avoid foods high in salt. (A list of foods high in salt is on the back.)
7. Avoid salt substitutes since they contain potassium.
8. Some people find that hard candy or gum moistens their mouths and makes it easier to drink less each day.



## How Does Salt Make Me Gain Fluid?

1. When you eat salt, you get thirsty. Your brain tells you to drink more water.
2. The extra fluid and salt stay in your body until your next dialysis because your kidneys cannot remove it.
3. We may not be able to safely remove all the extra fluid during your next dialysis because removing too much fluid quickly can be dangerous.
4. If we cannot remove all the fluid, you will still have extra fluid in your body when you leave dialysis.
5. To be able to remove this fluid, you will need to take in less than a liter a day of fluid or have an additional dialysis treatment.
6. If you continue to eat food with salt in it, it will be more difficult for you to limit the amount of fluid you drink.
7. If you continue to have too much fluid in your body, you are more likely to be short of breath, more likely to be hospitalized, and more likely to die because of the extra pressure you are putting on your heart.

## Foods High in Sodium

1. Bacon / Sausage
2. Any lunch meat or deli cheese
3. Most snack foods like chips
4. Canned Foods  
(unless marked low sodium)
5. Frozen dinners
6. Soy or Teriyaki Sauce
7. Seasoning such as Garlic Salt or Onion Salt
8. Shrimp
9. Processed or prepared foods
10. Restaurant foods

## Food that has Fluid

1. Jello
2. Rice
3. Ice Cream
4. Fruit
5. Juices
6. Tomatoes
7. Watermelon or any other melons
8. Ice
9. Soup

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