



Patient & Family Guide
2020

Managing Fluid Intake



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Managing Fluid Intake

Our bodies need fluid to work properly. The kidneys, liver, and heart work to keep fluids in balance.

Sometimes, fluid builds up in our bodies. You may not notice when this happens.

Signs that fluid may be building up in your body include:

- › fast weight gain
- › high blood pressure
- › swelling of hands and feet
- › shortness of breath
- › fatigue (tiredness)
- › bloating
- › nausea (feeling sick to your stomach)
- › changes in your blood work

With some medical conditions, you may need to limit your fluid intake.

It is important to weigh yourself each day.

Keep a daily routine using the 4 W's:

- › Wake up.
- › Wee (pee).
- › Weigh.
- › Write it down.

Sources of fluid in your diet

Your body gets fluid from water and other drinks (e.g., coffee, tea, milk, juice, pop, alcohol), and also from food. A fluid is anything that would be liquid at body temperature.

Fluids include:

- › all hot and cold drinks
- › frozen desserts, like ice cream or sorbet
- › ice cubes and Popsicles®
- › gelatin desserts, like Jell-o®
- › soups, consommé, broth
- › very juicy (drippy) fruit, like watermelon, very ripe melons, berries, ripe peaches, frozen fruit

Tips for managing your fluid intake

- Measure the amount of fluid you're allowed into a pitcher or jug. Every time you eat or drink a fluid, empty the same amount from the pitcher. Once it is empty, that's all for the day!



250 ml = 8 oz = 1 cup
180 ml = 6 oz = 3/4 cup
125 ml = 4 oz = 1/2 cup
60 ml = 2 oz = 1/4 cup

- Drink small amounts throughout the day.
- Use small cups and glasses.
- Take your pills with as little fluid as possible. This fluid must be counted.
- Rinse your mouth with water, but do not swallow it. Try ice-cold mouthwash to freshen your mouth.
- Brush your teeth more often throughout the day.
- Drink ice-cold liquids. They satisfy better than liquids at room temperature.
- **Suck on ice cubes or ice chips, but remember, they are part of your daily fluid intake.** (Try using ½ cup (125 ml) of water to make ice cubes at night, then pour off ½ cup (125 ml) of water from your pitcher first thing in the morning.)
- Frozen fruit, like grapes or berries, can be a nice change from ice cubes, but they still count as fluid.
- Suck on hard candy or mints. Use sugar-free candy if you have diabetes. Sour candy works best to help manage thirst.
- Drink lemonade instead of water, or squeeze lemon juice in your ice cubes when you make them.

- Stay away from salty foods. Salt makes you thirsty. Salt also makes you retain (keep) fluid.
- If you have diabetes, try to keep your blood sugar under control. High blood sugar will make you thirsty.
- Eat a healthy diet with protein at each meal. Protein foods include: meat, poultry, fish, seafood, eggs, dairy, dried beans, dried peas, and nuts. Eating a nutritious diet helps keep fluid in the right places.
- Remember to follow guidelines for all your medical conditions, like diabetes or kidney disease.

What should I do in hot weather?

You may need extra fluid during hot weather because you are sweating more. You may also need extra fluid if you are more active, or have a fever. Ask your health care provider for advice.

This pamphlet is just a guide. If you have questions, please talk to your health care provider. We are here to help you.

Call your health care provider if you:

- › **lose or gain more than 2 kg (4 pounds) over 2 days.** You do not gain fat overnight. Sudden changes in weight are likely related to fluid.
- › have more shortness of breath
- › have swelling in your hands, feet and/or belly area
- › have new blurred vision
- › feel bloated or your stomach is upset
- › feel lightheaded or dizzy
- › have side effects from your medicines

Go to the nearest Emergency Department or call 911 if you:

- › have tightness or pain in your chest
- › are very short of breath
- › are coughing up pink, frothy mucus

Dietitian: _____

Phone: _____

Other Contacts: _____

Phone: _____

