



How to Limit Fluid Intake

If you have congestive heart failure, drinking too much fluid can put extra stress on your heart and lungs. The fluids that you drink are absorbed into your bloodstream and increase total blood volume. Since your heart is weaker it cannot pump this extra fluid as well as it should. You may see an increase in your blood pressure and fluid can collect in your hands, feet and legs (called edema). The extra fluid can also collect in your lungs making it hard to breathe.

You will need to reduce the amount of liquids that you drink. Limit fluid intake to 1200 mL to 1500 mL (5 to 6 cups) per day, unless your doctor has ordered a specific amount.

What is considered fluid:

- Foods that contain liquids at room temperature and all beverages are considered fluid.

Beverages	Meals	Dessert
Water	Soups	Ice Cream
Juice		Sherbet
Milk		Jell-O
Alcohol		Popsicles
Tea*		Ices
Coffee*		Gelato
Soft Drinks*		
Ice		

*** These drinks often contain caffeine which increase the amount of urine produced. Ask your doctor if these drinks should be included in your diet.**

Try to drink the same amount of fluid every day and spread your liquids throughout the day. Take your medications with meals to avoid the need to drink extra fluids. Sip liquids slowly, use smaller cups to help control fluid portions.

How can I control thirst?

- Reduce salt intake as salt and salty foods increase your thirst.
- Reduce or avoid alcohol as it dehydrates your body and makes you feel thirsty.

What if my mouth and throat are dry?

- Suck on ice chips or ice cubes (1 cup ice chips equals 185 mL (¾ cup) of fluid.
- Chew sugarless gum or suck on hard candy.
- Rinse your mouth with cold water, or mouthwash and spit it out.
- Moisten your mouth with breath spray or a lemon or lime wedge.
- Snack on fresh fruits or vegetables between meals.
- Freeze cut up pieces of fruit and use as a snack.

How often should I weigh myself?

It is important to weigh yourself daily using the same scale. Weigh yourself first thing in the morning before you eat. Empty your bladder first, and weigh yourself with light clothing. Record your weight in your diary so you can keep track of any weight change.

Any fluid buildup will show up on the scales, as an increase in weight. If you gain 1 kg (2 lb.) in 2 days or 3 kg (5 lb.) in a week call your doctor or nurse.

Know about Alcohol

Always check with your doctor before you drink any alcohol.

Alcohol may not be suitable for you as it can:

- change how your medications work
- weaken the heart and cause arrhythmia's (irregular heartbeats)
- make you feel thirsty

Alcohol and the mix (pop, water or juice) count as part of your fluid intake.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation recommends that you limit alcohol to no more than 2 drinks per day if you are a man or 1 drink per day if you are a woman.

One drink is:

- 1 bottle of beer
- 5 oz. wine
- 1 ½ oz. of spirits

Dietitian: _____

Phone Number: _____