

Controlling fluid intake in heart failure

Why do I have to limit fluid?

In heart failure, the body often retains fluid, leading to:

- increased blood pressure (more work for the heart)
- difficulty breathing and shortness of breath (due to fluid in your lungs)
- swelling on ankles, hands and face
- nausea and bloating.

Your doctor may recommend limiting your intake of fluid to help control these symptoms. Your body is 60-70% fluid. There is a difference between fluid weight and body weight. Weight changes due to fluid occur quickly, over a period of days. Changes in body weight (muscles, bone and fat) occur more slowly, over weeks or months.

Taking daily weights is important.

Establish a daily routine:

Wake up, Wee, Weigh and Write it down.

***Call your doctor or heart failure nurse
if you lose or gain greater than 2kg
over 2 days.***

How much fluid can I have?

MY FLUID ALLOWANCE IS:

..... mL each day
(as advised by your doctor).

What should I do in hot weather?

You may need some extra fluid (500 mL) in hot weather. Please check with your doctor.

What should I count as fluid?

Fluid includes all drinks, and anything that is liquid at room temperature:

- water
- soft drink, cordial, fruit juice
- tea, coffee
- milk, milkshakes, thick shakes
- ice, iceblocks
- cream, ice-cream, custard, yoghurt
- jelly
- soup, gravy, sauces
- alcohol.

You should also count foods with a high fluid content that are consumed in large amounts e.g. porridge, pasta, rice or fruit.

What is the fluid content of foods?

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| ½ cup jelly or custard | 125mL |
| 200g yoghurt | 160mL |
| 1 cup cooked porridge | 160mL |
| ½ cup melon or piece of fruit | 100mL |
| 2 Tbsp gravy/sauce | 40mL |
| Tea/coffee in a mug | 300mL |
| 1 can soft drink or beer | 375mL |
| 1 cup cooked pasta or rice | 100mL |

Hints for fluid control

- Use jugs and measuring cups to **accurately** measure your fluid intake.
- Fill up a jug of water with your daily fluid allowance each morning and use this to keep track of how much fluid you are drinking throughout the day. If drinking other fluids e.g. tea, coffee, milk or having foods that contain fluids eg. rice, pasta, gravy, jelly etc pour the amount of fluid out of your jug to account for these other fluids/foods.
1 tablespoon = 20mL
1 metric cup = 250mL
1 litre = 1000mL = 1kg in fluid weight.
- Spread your fluid allowance over the day - don't drink it all at once!
- Drink from small sized cups / glasses rather than large.
- Try to use the same cup / glass so you know how many you can have over the day.
- Remember to include ice in your fluid count. *1 ice cube = 15mL.*
- Try sucking on frozen fluids (such as ice) or pieces of fruit from your daily fluids allowance as this takes longer to consume and is more thirst quenching.
- Remember to include water you drink to take your medications.
- **Limit salt and salty foods as these make you thirsty.** Foods high in salt include processed meats, canned vegetables, tinned soup, cheese, sauces, gravy, snack foods (salted nuts, crisps), pastry, and most takeaway foods.
- **Choose foods low in salt** - fresh fruit and vegetables; fresh meats, chicken, fish, and eggs; porridge and pasta; and "low salt" or "no added salt" foods.
- Look for sodium content of ideally **less than 120 mg per 100g** on the nutrition information panel of packaged foods.
- Do not add salt to your food at the table or in cooking.
- Brush your teeth or try mouthwash, mints, peppermints or chewing gum to freshen your mouth.
- Try sucking on boiled lollies or slices of lemon, rather than drinking.

Sample Meal Plan 1500mL Fluid Restriction

| Example 1 | | Example 2 | |
|---|---------------|--|---------------|
| Breakfast | Fluid mL | Breakfast | Fluid mL |
| 2 slices of wholegrain bread with 2 poached eggs / tomato / mushroom / jam / honey | | ½-1 cup high fibre cereal with ½ cup low fat milk | 125 |
| 1-2 tablespoons dried fruit | | 1 medium sized orange | 80 |
| 1 cup tea / coffee / water | 250 | ½ cup tea / coffee / water | 125 |
| <i>Breakfast total = 250mL</i> | | <i>Breakfast total = 330mL</i> | |
| Lunch | | Lunch | |
| 2 slices wholegrain bread or 1 x wrap or 4 rice cakes with scrape of avocado / marg / butter | | 1 cup salt reduced soup +/- bread | 250 |
| with cheese, 1 cup mixed salad +/- lean meat / egg / tuna / salmon / chicken | | 1 tub of low fat / diet yoghurt (150g) | 120 |
| ½ cup tinned fruit | 125 | ½ cup tea / coffee / water / juice | 125 |
| 1 cup tea / coffee / water / juice | 250 | | |
| <i>Lunch total = 375mL</i> | | <i>Lunch total = 495mL</i> | |
| Dinner | | Dinner | |
| 100-120g of lean meat / chicken (no skin) / fish | | 100-120g of lean meat / chicken (no skin) / fish | |
| baked potato | | with 1 cup rice / pasta (cooked) | 100 |
| plenty of other mixed cooked vegetables / salad | | plenty of other mixed cooked vegetables / salad | |
| low fat/diet yoghurt (150g) | 120 | ½ cup custard | 100 |
| 1 cup tea / coffee / water | 250 | ½ cup tea / coffee / water | 125 |
| <i>Dinner fluid total = 370mL</i> | | <i>Dinner fluid total = 325mL</i> | |
| Snack Ideas | | Snack Ideas | |
| 1 cup of low fat milk | 250 | 1 piece of fruit | 80 |
| 1 thin slice of fruit bread / raw unsalted nuts (2 tablespoons) OR 2-3 grainy crackers with cottage cheese and tomato | | 1 thin slice of fruit bread / raw, unsalted nuts (2 tablespoons) OR 2-3 grainy crackers with cottage cheese and tomato | |
| <i>Snack total = 250mL</i> | | <i>Snack total = 80mL</i> | |
| Plus 1 additional cup of fluid (water / juice / soda water / tea / coffee) | 250 | Plus 1 additional cup of fluid (water / juice / soda water / tea / coffee) | 250 |
| TOTAL Example 1 | 1495mL | TOTAL Example 2 | 1480mL |

Constipation

Constipation can be a problem in people with heart failure due to reduced fluid intake.

- To help **prevent** constipation include fibrous foods such as:
 - wholegrain cereals & breads
 - fruits & vegetables (include the skins where possible)
 - unsalted nuts or seeds
 - lentils and legumes e.g. baked beans (no added salt), red kidney beans, chick peas, lentils, or 4 bean mix.

- Gradually increase intake of high fibre foods and in small amounts.
- **Do not drink less than your fluid allowance.**
- Do not add unprocessed bran or psyllium-based products (Metamucil, Nocolox) to your diet as they require large volumes of fluid to work.
- Discuss suitable alternatives with your pharmacist if constipation continues.

Things I can do to improve my fluid control are:

1.

2.

3.

4.

For further information contact your Dietitian or Nutritionist

Name: _____ **Phone Number:** _____

National Heart Foundation of Australia. (2012). "Living well with Chronic Heart Failure." From www.heartfoundation.org.au/sitecollectiondocuments/Living-with-chronic-heart-failure.pdf

National Heart Foundation of Australia. (n.d.) "Managing fluid and decompensation." Retrieved from www.heartonline.au/HFM/risk-and-symptom-management/pages/Managing-fluid-and-decompensation.aspx