

My Treatment: Fluid Weight and Dry Weight



Taking charge of the amount of fluid you put on between treatments is important. While there are many things that come into play to get to your dry weight, telling the difference between real body weight and fluid weight is important. Each time before your treatment, you step on the scale and your weight gets written down. This number is compared to your “dry weight” and your weight from your last treatment. These weights may be the same, or they may be a little different.

Fluid Weight and Dry Weight

Fluid weight is the weight you gain between treatments from liquids found in what you eat and drink. The amount of fluid you gain is different depending on whether you urinate or not. If you gain a lot between treatments it will be harder to remove all of it during your treatment.

Fluid intake must be limited for people with kidney failure because too much fluid gain can cause:

- A rise in your blood pressure
- Swelling (edema)
- Trouble breathing

Dry weight is your body mass (weight) without extra fluid (water). Your doctor determines your dry weight by looking at your previous weight, your breathing, any swelling you have, and your blood pressure. Over time you may gain body weight and this may call for a change to your dry weight. Some reasons why your body weight may change:

- You may gain weight because your appetite gets better with enough dialysis.
- You may lose weight after an illness because your body burns more calories than usual, and you may lose your appetite.

What Can I Do?

- Watch how much you drink and eat. Fluid is in more things than just water. It is also in lots of foods and drinks such as:
 - Water, tea, coffee, colas, juice, beer, alcohol
 - Ice cream, sherbet, popsicles, milk shakes
 - Juice found in vegetables and fruits
 - Ice
 - Jell-o
 - Soup and broth
- Limit how much salt you use. Salt is also in many foods and drinks and causes water to remain in the body.
- Go to all your treatments and stay for your scheduled time.
- Take your medications like diuretics (water pills) that your doctor may prescribe.
- Monitor your weight on a regular basis.

My Questions

Ask Your Care Team:

- What can I do to keep my correct weight?
- I have trouble with my weight, what can I do?
- I have swelling and sometimes get short of breath, what could be the problem?
- Does dialysis help me lose body weight??

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