

# Tips to Help Control Fluid

Being thirsty is a challenge for dialysis patients. Because dialysis helps remove the excess fluid from your body, it is important to limit how much fluid you have between treatments. When you have too much fluid in your body ("Fluid Overload") it causes shortness of breath, swelling, high blood pressure and excessive weight gain. The more fluid that needs to be removed, the harder it is on your body, especially your heart. Limiting your fluid will help you feel better and stay healthy before, during and after dialysis without cramping or blood pressure changes. Here are some tips to help you take control of your fluid intake.



## Keep Track

- Measure fluid amounts
  - Write down your fluid intake in a notebook
    - Include liquids with meals, snacks and medications
    - Include all fluids from foods and anything that melts to a liquid
  - Use a water bottle that is marked with your daily goal
  - Download an app on your phone that allows you to track fluid intake
    - NKF's H2Overload - track fluid/weight/BP.
- Visit [www.kidney.org/apps](http://www.kidney.org/apps)

## Set Fluid Goals

Talk to your doctor and dietitian about setting fluid goals.

## Limit Sodium Intake

- Cook with herbs and spices instead of salt. Try: allspice, basil, bay leaf, caraway, cardamom, curry, dill, ginger, marjoram, rosemary, thyme, sage or tarragon.
- Avoid salt substitutes. Foods made with salt substitutes are high in potassium.
- Read food labels and choose low-sodium options.

## Control Thirst

- Limit sugar
- Limit caffeine and alcohol
- Suck on ice chips, crushed ice or popsicles
- Suck on frozen fruits like blueberries and grapes (1/2 cup)
- Spread out what you drink throughout the day
- Sip, do not gulp
- Try mint or lemon flavored water
- For dry mouth
  - use spray bottle
  - swish and spit to moisten your mouth
  - brush your teeth
  - use moist swabs
- Chew gum or suck on hard candy (sugar free)
- Keep your mind busy
- Read a book
- Do a crossword or word-search puzzle
- Try crocheting or sewing
- Keep cool by:
  - staying in the shade or indoors
  - staying on the lowest floor out of the sunshine if air conditioning is not available
  - dressing in loose-fitting, lightweight and light-colored clothes
  - wearing a hat

For more information or to file a grievance, please contact:

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