

# My Plan: How Do I Control My Fluid Gains?

Keeping the amount of fluid you gain down between dialysis treatments is important. A fluid is any liquid you drink and any food that turns into a liquid at room temperature. “Fluid overload” is when you have too much fluid in your body. It can make you feel bad and can be harmful to your health.

Limiting your fluid will help you feel better and stay healthy before, during and after dialysis without cramping or blood pressure changes. Having a plan can help you to stay in control of how much fluid you take in from food and drinks.



## What Is The Standard Fluid Goal?

If you do not make urine, your daily fluid limit will be about one liter, or 32 ounces, each day. Ask your doctor for a fluid goal specific to your needs.

## What Are Signs of Too Much Fluid?



Shortness of breath because of fluid in your lungs.



High blood pressure because of fluid buildup in your blood stream.



Your weight goes up quickly – True weight gain usually happens over a longer period of time.



Swelling can occur in your face, hands, ankles, feet and legs.

## What Can Happen If I Have Too Much Liquid?

### Short Term Effects



**Trouble Breathing**



**Headaches, Low Energy**



**Cramping**



**Swelling**

### Long Term Effects



**Congestive Heart Failure**



**Pulmonary Edema**



**High Blood Pressure**

## What Can I Do?



### To take control:

- Set a fluid goal with your doctor and dietitian
  - Use a water bottle that is marked with your daily goal
  - Drink only when you are thirsty and just enough to quench your thirst
  - Drink from small cups or glasses
  - Check with your doctor or pharmacist to see if any of your medications cause thirst or dry mouth
- Measure fluid amounts
- Keep track of your fluid intake in a notebook or download an app on your smartphone
  - Include drinks with meals, snacks and medications
  - Include all fluids from foods and anything that melts to a liquid



### To keep your thirst down:

- Limit sugar
- Limit salt (sodium) intake
  - Cook with herbs and spices
  - Try seasoning such as allspice, basil, bay leaf, caraway, cardamom, curry, dill, ginger, marjoram, rosemary, thyme, sage, tarragon
  - Avoid salt substitutes as these foods are high in potassium and should be avoided unless approved by your dietitian
  - Read food labels and choose low-sodium options
- Spray your mouth with mint or lemon-flavored water
- Suck on ice chips
- Brushing your teeth and having a clean, fresh mouth can make you want to drink less
- Chew gum or suck on hard candy (sugar-free)
- Keep your mind busy

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## My Questions: Ask Your Care Team:

- What should I do if I feel thirsty?
- How much am I allowed to drink?
- How can I measure how much fluid I drink in a day?
- How will I know if weight gain is fluid or body weight?
- What can I use in place of salt?



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