

# BEAT THE HEAT

## SURVIVING THE SUMMER ON A RESTRICTED FLUID INTAKE

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Hot summer days are wonderful but can be very hard for people who must restrict their fluid intake. This article is especially for people who have to try to manage both their fluid intake and beat the heat at the same time. Too much fluid can lead to swelling (edema), increased blood pressure, fluid weight gain or shortness of breath, and these can sometimes be quite dangerous. Too much fluid weight gain between your hemodialysis treatments can cause cramps or dizziness during dialysis. Please talk to your doctor if you experience any of these symptoms.

### Establish your daily fluid allowance

Check with your dietitian to determine the amount of fluid you are allowed each day. Weigh yourself every morning and evening and adjust your liquid intake to ensure you do not exceed a fluid weight gain of more than 1kg/day (2.2lbs/day). Generally you should not gain more than 2-2.5 kg (4.4-5.5 lbs) between hemodialysis treatments. However, this target may be different for you so consult your dietitian. Keep in mind that every 500 ml (2 cups) of fluid not used by the body equals 1/2 kg (1 lb) in weight gain. Fluid allowances may vary depending on your urine output. In general, you may drink 1 litre (4 cups) of fluid a day plus an amount equal to your urine output. You can obtain a container at your pharmacist to help determine your urine output. If you experience diarrhea and vomiting your fluid needs will be greater to prevent dehydration.

Everything liquid is a fluid. Fluids may include coffee, tea, popsicles, sherbet, ice cream, jello, soup and ice. Milk, soft drinks, juices, alcohol and liquid nutritional supplements are also fluids.

### Try these strategies to stay within your fluid allowance

#### DRINKING AND EATING

- Drink only when you are thirsty.
- Drink slowly.
- Don't drink from habit, or simply to be social.
- Use small cups and glasses for beverages and other liquids. Use a measuring cup to determine how much your various drinking glasses actually hold.
- Take your medications with food or with the beverage you drink with your meal.
- Choose cool, moist foods at meals.  
(Try our Summer Berry Semifreddo!)
- Avoid high sodium foods: you will be less thirsty.
- Try to get the most nutrition from your allowed liquids. Give up coffee, tea, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages. Choose milk, soups, juices and other nutritious foods.
- Between meals, snack on ice cold fruits and vegetables.
- Frozen grapes or raspberries can be a satisfying way to quench your thirst.



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