



Quality
Insights

Renal Network 4



Network 4 Patient Representatives

April Monthly Meeting

April 4th 2:00 PM

April 5th 2:00 PM

What do our Kidneys do?

One job of healthy kidneys is to remove excess fluid from the body. When your kidneys are not working properly, dialysis can remove some of the fluid, but you will also need to drink or eat less fluid.

Having “too much” fluid can cause problems, some of which are serious.

What happens if I have too much fluid?

- Swelling in your ankles and feet called edema (a-dee'-ma)
- Weakened heart muscle, and eventually heart failure caused from too much fluid stretching the heart muscle
- Shortness of breath caused from too much fluid around the lungs.
- High blood pressure
- Sudden drop in blood pressure causing you to feel faint or dizzy
- Chest pain
- Cramping during dialysis
- Headaches, nausea and overall “bad” feeling during and after your treatment
- **If you have continuous high fluid gains, you may be required to stay longer or come back for an extra treatment**

How do I know if I have too much fluid?

- You may not have any obvious symptoms or feel uncomfortable when your body has acquired too much fluid between dialysis treatments. But too much fluid in your body can put a strain on your cardiovascular system. Your dialysis team wants to make sure your treatment removes enough fluid. This is why you are:
 - weighed prior to the start of dialysis; to measure how much weight was gained since the last treatment
 - weighed after dialysis; to measure how much fluid was removed during your dialysis treatment

Your Dry Weight is your Goal

- The goal is to gain as little fluid as possible to avoid the strain on your body that excess fluid can cause. Your health care team will let you know what your goal weight is (your “Dry Weight”) and advise you on how much fluid you can safely gain between treatments.

Know how much fluid you are consuming

- Did you know?
 - 4 cups of fluid = 1 Kg?
 - 32 ounces = 1 Kg?
 - 1 quart of fluid = 1 Kg?
 - 1 liter of fluid = 1 Kg?
 - 1 Kilogram = 2.2 pounds.

What can I safely Gain?

- It is important not to gain more than 2 kg (4.4 pounds) between each treatment. This means you need to gain less than 1 kg per day
- Set up daily fluid consumption goals to keep yourself from consuming too much fluid in any given day. Also, it is very easy to forget what we eat or drink throughout the day, so measuring and recording your fluid intake will make it easier to stay on track.

Know your fluids

Fluid is anything you drink or anything that melts at room temperature. Here are some examples:

- *Water*
- *Soft drinks*
- *Italian ice*
- ***Ice***
- ***Popsicles***
- ***Soup***
- *Juice*
- ***Jell-O***
- *Beer*
- *Milk*
- ***Ice Cream***
- *Wine*
- *Coffee*
- ***Sherbet***
- *Alcohol*
- ***Shakes***
- *Iced or regular Tea*
- *Lemonade*
- ***Pudding/Custards***
- *Soft drinks*
- *Kool-Aid*

Take control

- Follow the fluid allowance that has been prescribed for you and do not hesitate to ask for help.
- Keep a daily fluid/food diary
- Keep track of what you drink in a day.
 - Start with an empty liter-sized bottle or a quart jar. Each time you drink, pour the same amount that you just drank into the bottle. When that bottle is full, you have used your fluid allowance for the day.

How can you take control?

- Ever hear of where there is smoke there is fire?
 - Same with Salt and Water
 - Where there is salt, soon there will be water
- Most important advise! **Avoid salt and salty foods**
- Salt makes you thirsty and can cause your body to retain fluid

What else can you do?

- Use a smaller glass to drink fluids
- Chew sugar-free gum
- Take medications with applesauce instead of liquid.
- Suck on sugar free hard candy, especially sour candy
- Prepare a spray bottle with water and lemon juice or cherry juice and use to lightly spray your mouth
- If you have diabetes, control your blood sugar (high blood sugar makes you thirsty)
- Rinse your mouth with cold mouthwash (don't swallow!)
- Stay out of the heat in the summer time
- Brush your teeth more often
- A frozen lemon slice or a couple of frozen grapes (4 or less) can take the edge off your thirst
- Measure all fluid with standard measuring cups

Having trouble with your fluid gain?

- Talk to your dietitian
- Talk to your doctor
- Partner with your team to develop a strategy that works for you.