

# Guidelines on Fluid Restriction

Patients must contact their dietitians for any questions regarding the incorporation of information obtained from this guideline into their diets.

Maintaining **fluid balance** in the body is one of the primary functions of the healthy kidneys. During kidney failure this function is impaired, resulting in disturbances in the body's fluid balance and the development of fluid overload. This can become a burden to especially the heart (which has to work harder) and the lungs (causing shortness of breath). It can also cause a sudden increase in body weight and swelling, all signs that your fluid intake is too much for your kidneys.

It is important to be aware of the amount of fluid that you consume and how much urine you are passing. In the early stages of kidney failure it is usually not necessary to restrict your fluid intake. Your doctor or dietitian will let you know about the need for fluid restriction and the amount of fluid that you are allowed to take.

## Which food items can be regarded as fluids?

- Water, large amounts of ice (crushed ice or ice cubes)
- Coffee, tea
- Milk, buttermilk
- Cold drink, fruit juice
- Low fat yoghurt, ice cream
- Jelly and custard
- Soup
- Wine, beer or other alcoholic drinks

## Moisture content of food

- The moisture content of fruit and vegetables are usually higher compared to other types of food.
- Depending on the type and amount of food that you eat, solid foods can supply as much as 500 – 1000 ml of fluid per day (or an average of 800ml/day).

## Hints to control your thirst

- Restrict your salt intake
- Suck on an ice cube
- Spread your fluids evenly throughout the day
- Chewing sugar-free gum
- Use an aerosol mouth freshener

## Recommended fluid intake

Ask your dietitian how much fluid you are allowed.

MI per day

Cups per day

Dietitian: .....

Date: ..... / ..... / .....

Tel: .....

E-mail: .....

Fax: .....

