

## Controlling Fluid Intake

### What is Fluid?

A fluid is anything that is liquid at room temperature such as ice, water ice, ice cream/sherbet, juice, soup, coffee or jello/pudding. All foods contain moisture (fluid) in different amounts. When measuring your fluid intake, you need to count all liquid items as well as those that melt at room temperature. You also need to count watermelon as 98% water.

### What Effect Does Fluid Have On Me?

Persons with decreased heart function tend to retain fluid in their body. Normally extra fluid is filtered out of the body by the kidneys and is made into urine. However, when the heart is not working properly, fluid can build up in the feet and legs, abdomen, or other tissues of the body. Shortness of breath or difficulty with breathing can occur when fluid collects in the lungs or around the heart.

### How Can I Control My Fluid Intake?

The amount of fluid you are permitted each day (fluid allowance) depends on your body's needs and your urine output. Plan liquids so they are spaced out over an entire day.

- Your doctor may recommend a fluid restriction of about 48 ounces of fluid per day (6 cups of fluid per day. 1 cup = 8 ounces).
- Discuss this with your doctor to determine what intake is best for you.
- Keep a daily log of your fluid intake.
- What is your strategy?

### Tips for Controlling Fluid Intake:

- Drink ONLY when thirsty.
- To moisten a "dry" mouth:
  - Lemon wedges
  - Lemon drops
  - Mint candy or gum (be sure it's sugar free if diabetic)
- Rinse your mouth with water or mouthwash, but do not swallow.
- Try keeping grapes or strawberries in the freezer and have one instead of drinking.
- Suck on an ice cube instead of drinking a liquid.
- Remember: 1 cup of ice chips = 1/2 cup of water
- Ice adds fluid. Make beverages cold by putting the glass in the freezer instead of adding ice.
- Use small cups and glasses for beverages.
- If possible, take medicines with mealtime liquids

**Foods that You Need to Count as Fluid:**

- Water
- Ice
- Ice Cream
- Sherbert
- Popsicles
- Milk
- Jello/Pudding
- Soup
- Gravy/Sauces
- Water Ice
- Tea
- Coffee
- Soda
- Juice
- Watermelon