

How to follow a fluid allowance while in hospital

Information for dialysis patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:

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Fluid balance

One of the key jobs of healthy kidneys is to control the amount of fluid in the body. This is known as **fluid balance**. Excess water normally passes out of the body as urine. However if you have problems with your kidneys, they may be unable to stop extra fluid from building up. This is known as **fluid overload**.

Fluid overload can cause the body to swell. You may notice this first around the ankles and in the legs. It can also put a strain on the heart and lungs, causing problems such as:

- High blood pressure
- Breathlessness due to fluid on the lungs
- Chest pain/angina
- Swelling of ankles, hands or eyes
- Headaches

How much can I drink?

You might have been given a guide to the maximum amount of fluid intake that is healthy for you. This is called a **fluid allowance (or fluid restriction)**. Everyone's fluid allowance is different and may change over time. Fluid allowance is calculated according to signs of dehydration or overhydration, the amount of urine passed in 24 hours, blood pressure and signs of fluid retention. In general, the more urine you produce, the more fluid you can drink. Fluid allowance is usually calculated as 500mls plus the amount of urine passed in 24 hours however your medical team will let you know if this is different when in hospital.

Your fluid allowance is

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Keeping to a fluid allowance- here are some helpful hints and tips:

- Avoid added salt and avoid eating salty foods to help control your thirst
- Main meals that are coded with a ♥ are low in salt
- Avoid soup and try to only have small amounts of gravy
- Divide your fluid allowance throughout the day
- Remember to count the fluid you use to take your medications and milk added to cereal
- Try drinking only half cups
- Suck on boiled sweets or mints
- Rinse your mouth with mouth wash or some iced water or clean your teeth
- Citrus flavours help to stimulate saliva production – try lemon sweets or eating slices of orange or lemon
- Cold drinks quench your thirst better than hot drinks

Handy Measures used on the ward

Jug	750ml
Orange cup	200ml
White plastic cup	150ml
Tall mug	250ml
Small mug	200ml
Plastic beaker	200ml
Can of soft drink	330ml
Standard bottle of soft drink	500ml
Breakfast fresh orange juice	100ml
Milk on cereal	150ml
Small pot yoghurt	100ml

The following shows the types of cups, mugs, and beakers used for drinks on the ward and how much fluid they hold.

Plastic beaker
200ml



Mugs
Small – 200ml
Tall – 250ml



Orange cup
200ml



White plastic cup
150ml



An example of a 1000ml fluid allowance

- Morning tablets: 100ml water
- Breakfast cereal with milk: 150ml
- Mid morning small mug of tea: 200ml
- Lunch with 1 x white plastic cup of drink: 150ml
- Mid afternoon small mug of tea: 200ml
- Evening meal with small pot of yoghurt: 100ml
- Afternoon tablets: 100ml water

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: The Nutrition and Dietetics Department, Tel: 01904 725269, Email: yhs-tr.yorkdietitians@nhs.net.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website: www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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