

Your Heart Failure and Fluid Restriction



A Guide for Patients

What is heart failure?

If you have heart failure, this means that your heart is not pumping blood through your body as well as it should. (*Heart Failure Society of America*)

Why is fluid restriction an important way to manage my heart failure?

When you drink too much fluid, your heart has to work very hard to pump the excess fluid around your body. Too much fluid in your body can make your heart failure even worse and, can cause shortness of breath, weight gain, swelling of the feet and legs, lack of energy, a swollen or tender abdomen, a cough, and difficulty sleeping at night.

Things that you can do to control your fluid level and help manage your heart failure:

Limit the fluids you drink

Ask your healthcare professional about how much fluid you are allowed to have each day.

- Usually 1.5 to 2 Litres (6-8 cups or 3-4, 500 cc water bottles) per day is the normal amount for people with heart failure.

Please visit the UHN Patient Education website for more health information:

www.uhnpatienteducation.ca

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Created: 05/2011
Form: D-5808



Tips to control the amount of fluid you drink

- 1 Plan ahead.**
Spread out the fluid you drink over the day.
For example:
Breakfast 250 cc = 1 cup
Lunch 250 cc = 1 cup
Dinner 250 cc = 1 cup
750 cc or 3 cups to have between meals
and bedtime = 1.5 Litres
- 2** Take your pills with meals or with applesauce or soft food.
- 3** Use small cups and glasses and SIP SLOWLY.
- 4** Freeze some of your fluid in an ice cube tray. You may find it more pleasing than drinking the same amount of fluid, as it stays in the mouth longer.
- 5** Keep track. Post some paper on the fridge.
Each time you drink, measure it first then mark it down on the paper.

How to feel less thirsty



Brush your teeth more often or, rinse your mouth with water, but do not swallow it. Be sure not to over-brush.



Keep your mouth cool and fresh by rinsing with cold mouthwash.



Lemon wedges, hard sour candies, chewing gum, breath mints or breath spray may help to keep your mouth from drying out.



Add lemon or lime to your water or ice.



Eat fruits and vegetables ice cold.
Frozen grapes or strawberries are very nice.



Try licking a lemon or a lime.



Use a humidifier to moisten the air.
This will help your mouth feel less dry.

Examples of fluid

8 ounces = 1 cup = 250 cc

Some examples of fluid:

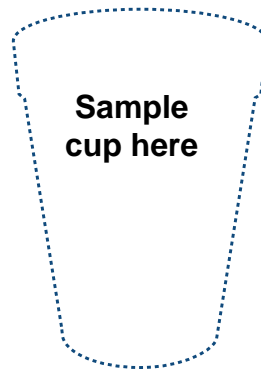
- Water
- Tea or Coffee
- Milk, Cream
- Juices and fruit drinks
- Soda pop
- Soup
- Jello®
- Ice cream, Sherbet
- Popsicles
- Ice cubes
- Alcoholic drinks
- Liquid nutrition supplements, such as Ensure® or Boost®
- Water based fruits and vegetables, such as watermelon or tomatoes

A helpful tip for you:

With a measuring cup, measure the amount of fluid held by your drinking glasses, tea or coffee cup, and soup bowl. Knowing how much fluid they hold will help you to plan the amount of fluid you can drink for the day.

Hospital cup sizes

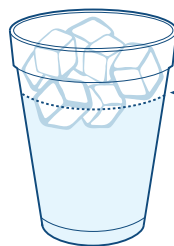
Large styrofoam cup
(drinking water)
= 2 cups or 500 cc



Small styrofoam cup
= 200 cc



Small styrofoam
cup filled with
ice to top of cup
= 175 cc



**Fill to
here**



**For more information about heart failure and fluid restriction,
visit these websites:**

www.heartfailurematters.org

www.abouthf.org

www.uhnpatienteducation.ca

About The Peter Munk Cardiac Centre

*For more information about heart and circulation conditions, a glossary of terms, maps, information about our location and how to be referred, please visit [**www.petermunkcardiaccentre.ca**](http://www.petermunkcardiaccentre.ca)*