

Learning About Restricting Fluids When You Have Heart Failure



Why is it important to limit fluids when you have heart failure?

With heart failure, having too much fluid in your body can lower sodium levels in the blood. It can also cause symptoms such as swelling. Limiting fluids, if your doctor tells you to, can help balance your body's sodium level.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Find a way of tracking the fluids you take in that works for you. Here are two methods you can try:
 - Write down how much you drink throughout the day.
 - Keep a container filled with the amount of liquid allowed for the day. As you drink liquids during the day, such as a 6-ounce cup of coffee, pour that same amount out of the container. When the container is empty, you've had your liquid for the day.
- Count any foods that will melt (such as ice cream, gelatin, or flavored ice treats) or liquid foods (such as soup) as part of your fluids for the day. Also count the liquid in canned fruits and vegetables as part of your daily intake, or drain them well before serving.
- Space your liquids throughout the day. Then you won't be tempted to drink more than the amount your doctor recommends.
- To relieve thirst without taking in extra water, try chewing gum, sucking on hard candy (sugarless if you have diabetes), or rinsing your mouth with water and spitting it out.