

# Managing your own fluid balance

This leaflet is for renal patients and is a guide to managing your fluids.

## Why are you asking me to monitor my fluid balance?

One of the main functions of your kidneys is to maintain the right amount of fluid in your body. With kidney failure, a common problem is not being able to get rid of excess water as your kidneys produce less urine. You may be receiving dialysis to help remove excess water.

If you are not passing enough urine, you may find that your body swells up as fluid accumulates. If you are upright, this often starts with your ankles, due to gravity, before spreading up the body. If you are lying flat, the excess fluid may settle in or around your lungs, causing you to be short of breath (a dangerous condition called 'pulmonary oedema').











If your kidneys are not getting rid of excess fluid well enough, you will have to reduce the quantity you drink. Some patients have greater fluid restrictions than others (anything from half a litre a day to 1.5 litres a day).

If you are on a fluid restriction, your doctor or nurse will tell you how much you can safely have and you will be asked to maintain a fluid chart while you are on the ward. The ward staff will give you this fluid chart and we will ask you to record the volume of everything you drink and the volume of urine you pass. This information forms part of your day-to-day review on the doctors' rounds.

Please see below for the average volumes of cups and bowls used on the ward.

In addition, please record the volume of any drinks brought in from elsewhere that you take (the volume will be on the label of the carton/can/bottle).

## Fluid intake: average volumes

Cup		180ml	Milk on cereal		Assume 140ml
Beaker		180ml	Ice cream tub		55ml
Small pot of orange juice		80ml	Jelly pot		100ml
Soup bowl		150ml	Milk pudding		150ml
Yoghurt pot		Assume 100ml is fluid	Custard		100ml

Compassionate

Aspirational

Resourceful

Excellent

## **Fluid output: passing urine**

You will be given bottles/bedpans when you pass urine. **Please ask a member of staff to measure it** and tell you the volume for you to record.

Thank you for your co-operation

Victoria Ward

Tel 0118 322 7476

## **Friends and Family Test**

While you are in the hospital, you are likely to be asked the Friends & Family test question – *Overall, how was your experience of our service?* Please spare a few seconds to answer this in and either give the card to a member of staff or post it in the box provided on the ward. Your feedback can help us assess and, if necessary, improve our services.

To find out more about our Trust visit [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

SSN Keri Benham & Kevin Jesty, Dietitian, May 2023.

Next review due: May 2025.