

Limiting Fluids

When you are on a fluid restriction

This handout explains what to expect if you are on a fluid restriction while you are in the hospital.

Your doctor recommends that you limit the amount of fluids in your diet. This is called being on “fluid restrictions.” Limiting the amount of fluids you take in will help lessen the buildup of fluids in your body and help your healing.

When you are on fluid restrictions, hospital kitchen staff will track the total amount of fluids provided to you with each meal. They will not send you more than the amount your doctor ordered.

For example, if your doctor has ordered:

- **1,000 mL fluid restriction**, the hospital kitchen will send you no more than 330 mL of fluids each meal
- **1,500 mL fluid restriction**, the hospital kitchen will send you no more than 500 mL of fluids each meal
- **2,000 mL fluid restriction**, the hospital kitchen will send you no more than 660 mL of fluids each meal

What foods are fluids?

Fluids in the diet include more than just the liquids you drink. Some foods contain enough fluid to be called “fluids,” even if they are solid when you eat them.

The table on the next page shows the amount of fluid in a serving of each of these foods when ordered from the hospital kitchen.



Ask your doctor or nurse if you have any questions about being on fluid restrictions during your hospital stay.

Foods and Beverages	Fluid in 1 Serving	
	cc or mL	Fl. oz.
All soups and broths	180	6
Buttermilk	240	8
Coffee	180	6
Creamer or half & half	120	4
Ensure Clear	200	7
Ensure Plus	240	8
Gatorade	360	12
Glucerna	240	8
Hot chocolate	200	7
Ice cream	90	3
Instant breakfast with milk	240	8
Italian ice	120	4
Jell-O	120	4
Juice	120	4
Juice, thickened	240	8
Lemonade	120	4
Milk (skim, 2%, whole, or chocolate)	240	8
Milkshakes	360	12
Nepro	240	8
Popsicle	90 to 120	3 to 4
Sherbet or sorbet	120	4
Soda	360	12
Soy milk	240	8
Tea, hot or cold	180 to 240	6 to 8
Tomato juice or V-8	180	6
Water or ice	Varies	Varies
Yogurt, nonfat	180	6

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

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Other Foods to Limit

Peaches, pears, melon, mandarin oranges, and other juicy fruits can contain a lot of water. You may need to limit your intake of these items as well as the foods and beverages listed above.

If you usually eat these foods, talk with your healthcare team about the right amount for you to eat.