

## Watch your fluids - Heart Failure

This handout describes the signs of fluid build up and offers tips for watching your fluid intake.

### Watch out for fluid build up

- Watch out for signs of fluid build up
  - Gain weight fast
  - Legs swell
  - Face gets puffy
  - Short of breath
  - Blood pressure goes up

### Measure how much fluid you take in a day

- Write down how much fluid you drink a day
  - Count these as fluids, too
    - Soup
    - Ice cream
    - Gravy
    - Jelly
    - Pudding
- Take the record of your daily fluid intake with you when you visit your doctor
- Ask your doctor how much fluid to have in a day

### Check your weight every day

- A big weight gain in just a few days can mean you are getting too much fluid
- If you gain 3 pounds in a week, call your doctor
- Weigh yourself the same way each time
  - Same time of day, morning is best
  - Before you eat
  - After you urinate
  - With clothes or without clothes, but always the same way
  - Use the same scale
- Write down the number in a daily log or chart
- Take your log or chart with you to the doctor

### Tips for watching your fluids

- Eat chunky soup with a fork and do not drink the broth
- Do not drink too much at one time
  - Take small sips
  - Use a small cup
  - Do not get refills (cover your cup or turn it over when it's empty)

## Watch your fluids - Heart Failure (cont)

- Try to keep from getting thirsty
  - Do not eat a lot of salty or spicy food
  - Suck on ice instead of drinking fluid
  - Suck on hard candy
  - Chew gum
  - If your mouth is dry, rinse with cold water and spit it out
  - Do not get too hot

### Diuretics (water pills)

- Helps you get rid of extra salt
- Circle the drug that you take
  - Eplerenone (Inspra)
  - Spironolactone (Aldactone)
  - Lasix (furosemide)
- Side effects
  - Hard on your kidneys
  - May change how much sodium, potassium, or other electrolytes stay in your blood
  - May make you very thirsty or dehydrated
  - Breasts may get swollen
  - Men may get impotent or unable to get or keep an erection
- You will need your blood checked every few months

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The content in this letter is intended as general information and may not apply to you or your condition. Talk to your doctor about how to best use this information and how to take care of your medical condition. This information is not intended to provide or replace professional medical advice or services.

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