

Hemodialysis Unit

Fluid Balance – When You Are Too Wet or Too Dry

In order to get the best results from Home Hemodialysis, it is very important to keep the amount of fluid in your body balanced. When fluid is balanced, you are at your ideal body weight. Your doctor determines your ideal body weight based on:

- your blood pressure
- how well you feel
- clear lungs, no shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- no swelling

Too Wet

What does being too wet mean?

This means you have too much fluid in your body so you are above your ideal body weight. This is called fluid overload.

It is important to remember that fluid comes from what you drink and eat. Anything that is a liquid at room temperature is a fluid. Some examples are soup, yogurt and ice cream.

Why is being too wet a problem?

When you have fluid overload you have an increased risk of high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease such as heart failure, heart attack and stroke. Your lungs may also be affected and cause breathing problems.

What can cause you to be too wet?

This can happen for many reasons such as:

- drinking and/or eating too much fluid; having too much salt in your diet
- missing dialysis treatments
- not able to remove target fluid during dialysis therefore you are above ideal weight after treatment
- taking your water pills such as Lasix or Furosemide incorrectly
- loss of appetite for several days
- decrease in the amount of urine you pass

Fluid Balance

How may you feel when you are too wet?

You may have some or all of these symptoms:

- feel full or bloated; feet, ankles, legs, hands and/or face look or feel swollen
- blood pressure is high
- weight is _____ kilograms above your ideal body weight
- short of breath and/or not able to lie flat and breathe well
- constant cough or feel congestion in your lungs

What do you do when you are too wet?

- If you feel any of the above symptoms of being too wet, contact your home hemodialysis nurse



Call the Home Hemodialysis Unit if:

- fluid continues to build up in your feet, ankles, hands and/or face
- you continue to gain weight
- the bottom number on your blood pressure is above 100
- you have shortness of breath
- you have a decrease in the amount of urine you pass

If it is after hours, a weekend or holiday other than Christmas Day and New Year's Day:

Monday to Friday:

- 4:00 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. 905-522-1155 ext. 38253. Say you are a home hemodialysis patient.
- After 11:30 p.m. if you feel your concern cannot wait until the morning, go to the nearest Emergency Department or contact the Nephrologist-on-Call for advice at 905-521-6049. Tell the operator you are a home hemodialysis patient.

Saturday and Sunday:

- 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. 905-522-1155 ext. 38253. Say you are a home hemodialysis patient.
- After 5:30 p.m. if you feel your concern cannot wait until the morning, go to the nearest Emergency Department or contact the Nephrologist-on-Call for advice at 905-521-6049. Tell the operator you are a home hemodialysis patient.



Christmas Day and New Year's Day:

- If you feel your concern cannot wait until the next working day, go to the nearest Emergency Department or contact the Nephrologist-on-Call for advice at 905-521-6049. Tell the operator you are a home hemodialysis patient.



Too Dry

What does being too dry mean?

This means you have too little fluid in your body so you are below your ideal body weight. This is called dehydration.

Why is being too dry a problem?

When you are too dry or dehydrated, you may have low blood pressure. Dehydration can cause dizziness and lead to a fall where you break bones and/or have a more serious head injury. It can also cause a fast heartbeat, irregular heart beat and or death.

What are the causes of being too dry?

There are many causes for dehydration. Some of these are:

- not having enough fluids that your diet allows
- taking water pills such as Lasix or Furosemide incorrectly
- changes from aging such as less desire to drink or having poor taste buds
- drinking too much caffeine or alcohol
- being outside in hot weather for a long time
- fever, infection, vomiting, diarrhea
- taking too much fluid off during a dialysis treatment
- gain real body weight

please turn over →

How may you feel when you are too dry?

There are many signs of dehydration. Some are:

- low blood pressure; feeling light-headed; fainting and/or falling
- headaches, feeling confused; feeling very tired or weak; muscle cramps
- voice change, dry mouth, lips, nose, sunken eyes, no 'spring' in skin

What do you do when you are too dry?

- Lie down.
- Drink something salty like canned soup.
- If you are on dialysis you can infuse extra normal saline
- Contact your home hemodialysis nurse.



Call the Home Hemodialysis Unit if:

- You do not feel better.

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