



Royal Papworth Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Fluid and salt advice

A patient's guide

Advice for patients on a fluid restriction

Your doctor may have placed you on a fluid restriction or asked you to reduce the amount of fluid you consume.

What counts as fluid?

- All drinks including those taken with tablets
- Sauces such as gravy or white sauce added to meals
- Yoghurt
- Milk on cereal
- Soup
- Ice cubes and ice lollies
- Juice from tinned fruit

Foods that contain larger amounts of fluid and need to be counted

- Custard or milk puddings (100ml of fluid approximately in a 140g serving)
- Porridge (120ml of fluid approximately in a 140g serving)
- Jelly (120ml of fluid approximately in a 140g serving)
- Ice cream (40ml of fluid approximately per scoop)

You do not need to count fluid used to rehydrate pasta or rice as the fluid is not being taken as liquid.

Your fluid restriction should be followed unless you are told otherwise by your doctor. If you receive conflicting advice, contact your doctor for clarification.

Helpful hints for sticking to a fluid restriction

- Measure your usual cup and bowls to give you a guide to the fluid you are taking (pour water from the cup or bowl into a jug and measure the amount it holds).
 - Mark out your fluid restriction for the day either in a jug or bottle or as a set number of cups. Place near the sink to remind you.
 - Drink half cups of liquids so they are spread out more regularly throughout the day.
 - Use smaller cups or glasses.
 - Try re-usable ice cubes which don't melt into the drinks or add fluid content but can help chill drinks.
 - Sip drinks slowly.
 - Avoid salty foods which may make thirst worse and avoid adding salt to foods or in cooking.
- Take tablets with a small amount of iced water to help quench thirst.
 - Suck on mints to help alleviate a dry mouth.
 - Avoid very sugary sweets or sugary drinks which can dry out the mouth. Try sugar free alternatives.

Handy measurements

1 tablespoon	15ml
1 fluid ounce (fl oz)	30ml
1 average mug	250ml
1 average tea cup	150ml
¼ pint	150ml
½ pint	300ml
1 pint	600ml

Fluids in food

These are meant as a guide only - portion sizes and make up of foods may differ significantly

Food	Fluid content (approx)
1 x standard scoop of ice cream	40ml
¼ pint or 150mls of custard	100ml
⅓ pint or 200ml of rice pudding	150ml
¼ pint or 150ml of jelly	150ml
⅓ pint or 200ml of milk	200ml
2 tablespoons of gravy	30ml
1 standard portion of white sauce (2oz/50g)	40ml
1 standard cereal bowl of porridge	150ml
Standard bowl of soup (200ml)	200ml

You should only be restricting fluid if advised to do so by your doctor.

Salt advice for patients on a fluid restriction

The recommended **maximum** salt intake for adults in the UK is 6g per day.

Salt in the diet may be restricted by your doctor to help reduce blood pressure, protect your heart and help to reduce fluid retention.

Reducing salt in the diet can also be especially helpful for patients following a fluid restriction, as salt can increase your thirst and make restrictions difficult to stick to.

No added salt

- Avoid adding additional salt to food in cooking. Season instead with pepper, mustard, herbs and spices, lemon juice or garlic (not garlic salt) etc.
- Don't add salt to food at the table – try to break the habit of picking up the salt shaker automatically.
- Salt substitutes may not be a suitable alternative as they have large amounts of potassium which may be harmful for some patients. Please consult your doctor for advice before using salt substitutes.

Reducing salt in your diet can make foods taste bland initially, but in time taste buds do alter. Try adding other herbs and spices to make food more exciting.

High salt foods to avoid or eat occasionally

- Salted nuts
- Salted crisps
- Peanut butter
- Salted crackers
- Packet soups (check labels on canned soups)
- Stock cubes
- Vegetables canned in salted water
- Baked beans (look for lower salt types instead)
- Fish or meat canned in brine (choose oil or sauce)
- Ready made sauces (check labels)
- Some processed ready meals (check labels)
- Gravy or sauce with high salt contents (check labels).
- Smoked or cured fish or bacon
- Tinned meats such as ham, chopped ham and pork, corned beef, spam
- Processed meats such as sausages, beef burgers (check labels)
- Takeaway food can be high in salt (most companies have

nutritional information available in restaurants or on websites)

- Cheese spreads (check labels)
- Marmite or vegemite or soy sauce
- Pickles, Bovril, seasoning mixes

Labelling

Salt can be hidden in foods. Checking labels can be helpful in deciding whether foods are high in salt or not.

Sometimes salt is listed as sodium which can be misleading as the values are smaller.

	Salt	Sodium
Low	0g - 0.3g	0g - 0.1g
Medium	0.31g - 1.5g	0.1g - 0.6g
High	More than 1.5g	More than 0.6g

These values are per 100g of product. Check the 100g column for salt and sodium content. Traffic light labels on the front of products can also be helpful.

Look for green symbols for salt but be aware some products are listed per serving, checking the label may also be necessary.

Other flavours which may be helpful to add to foods

Apple	With pork or cheese
Bouquet garni or Basil	In stews and casseroles
Chives or spring onion	Chopped and added to potatoes or salads
Curry powder	Use in meat, chicken, vegetable and rice dishes
Garlic	Crush and use in meat or salad dishes Add to butter or margarine and use on potatoes or bread
Lemon juice	Add to fish or chicken dishes
Mint or mint sauce	Boil with potatoes and vegetables or with lamb
Mustard	Rub the surface of meat with mustard before cooking. Add to salads
Nutmeg	Sprinkle over vegetables, particularly mashed potato, cabbage and cauliflower
Paprika	Use as a garnish in chicken and rice dishes
Pepper	Add to savory dishes
Rosemary	Add to meat when roasting or roasted potatoes or cabbage or carrots
Tarragon	In scrambled egg, chicken and fish
Vinegar	Add to chips, peas and hard boiled eggs

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