

# Pre-Transplant Education

## Fluid



### ***Why is drinking fluid important after kidney transplant?***

Your transplant kidney needs lots of fluid to keep it working well. Often the kidney comes from someone who is larger than you. To keep that kidney hydrated, it will need a lot of fluid.

### ***Why is this so different than before transplant?***

Before transplant some patients don't pee much and others pee a lot. After transplant all patients need a lot of fluid. This may be more than you were allowed to drink before. One change is that before transplant you were probably drinking because you were thirsty. After transplant you may not feel thirsty but you still need to drink all your fluid.

Each patient is a bit different. The amount of fluid that you need to drink will be decided in the first 1-2 weeks after transplant.

### ***What happens if I don't drink enough fluid after kidney transplant?***

You could become dehydrated.

### ***How does being dehydrated affect my transplanted kidney?***

Your kidney needs lots of fluid to work. If it doesn't get enough fluid, it may stop cleaning your blood as well as it should. If this happens often, it could cause damage. Over time, this damage can become permanent.

### ***What are the signs and symptoms of being dehydrated?***

You may feel thirsty. Your pee looks darker and you may pee less. You could get a headache or feel dizzy.



### ***What should I do if I cannot drink enough?***

You always need to keep track of how much you are drinking. If you are sick with a cold or flu, and you are not able to drink all of your fluid, you may need to come to the hospital to get IV fluid. You should call the transplant team if you are sick and cannot drink all of your fluid.

If you are always having trouble drinking all your fluid, you might need extra help. This could mean using a g-tube that you already have or it may mean having a g-tube put in. Even with a g-tube, you can still drink some or all of your fluid by mouth.

### ***How can I make sure I drink enough to protect my transplant kidney?***

Your transplant team will tell you how much you need to drink every day. You should plan how to drink that amount each day. It helps to have a bottle that you drink from all the time and know how many of those bottles you need to drink a day. It is important to spread out your drinking – a bottle at breakfast, a bottle at lunch, a bottle at supper and a bottle before bed.



### ***What are the best choices to drink?***

Water is your best choice to drink since it is good for your body and does not have calories. There are lots of ways to flavour water to make it more fun to drink. Ask your transplant team for suggestions. The other good choice to drink is low fat (skim) milk. If you are very active playing a sport, it might be suggested to drink an electrolyte drink, such as PowerAde or Gatorade. You should not drink energy drinks and should limit other caffeinated drinks. Alcohol will make you pee more and can lead to dehydration. If you are thinking about drinking alcohol, talk to the transplant team about what is safe.