

Emergency Meal Plan for People on Dialysis

Going to all your dialysis treatments is important to keep you feeling healthy and well. However, there may be a time when you cannot make it to your dialysis treatment. For example, you may have to miss dialysis if there is a natural disaster or emergency.

It is a good idea to be ready and know what to do if you must miss your dialysis treatment. It will still be important to keep your blood values and fluid gains within normal limits until you can dialyze again.

Emergency meal planning

You can follow this nutrition guide for up to 3 days if you cannot dialyze. **Remember that this is not a substitute for dialysis or your usual dialysis diet. This guide should only be used in emergencies.**

This diet is stricter than your usual diet. This strict plan is needed to help you control the build-up of potassium, phosphorus, urea, and fluids. These can be life-threatening if you miss too many dialysis treatments.

Tips to help you plan for an emergency

Water and electricity may be cut off, keeping you from cooking your meals the usual way.

- When you have no power, eat the food in your fridge the first day. Eat foods in your freezer while food still has ice crystals in the centre (up to 4 days after the power goes off). Open your fridge and freezer as little as possible.
- Do not eat food from a jar or can that has been open more than 4 hours.
- Throw out unused food after 4 hours or use single portion containers.

Emergency meal plan

Choose a daily meal plan for yourself using the following guide. Remember to **watch your portion sizes**. Each food listed in the following food groups is equal to **one serving**.

If you have diabetes, avoid sweet foods. Eat small meals and snacks more often to prevent low blood sugar reactions.

Vegetables, Fruit, and Fruit juices: 4 servings daily

- Apple, pear or peach, 1 small
- Red or green grapes or cherries, 10
- Canned pears, peaches, pineapple, cherries, mandarin oranges, plums, or fruit cocktail, drained, ½ cup (125 mL)
- Applesauce, ½ cup (125 mL)
- Fresh, canned or frozen blueberries, strawberries, or raspberries, ½ cup (125 mL)
- Cooked green or yellow string beans, carrots, zucchini, peas, corn, asparagus, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, cucumber, lettuce, onions, peppers, or summer squash, ½ cup (125 mL)

Grain Products: 6 servings daily

- White bread, 1 slice
- White roll, 1 small
- White English muffin, 1
- Unsalted crackers, 6
- Plain white bagel, ½
- White pita bread, ½
- Graham crackers, 4
- Unsalted rice, noodles or pasta, ½ cup (125 mL)
- Cream of Wheat[®], Cream of Rice[®], Cornflakes[®], Puffed Rice[®], Puffed Wheat[®], Rice Krispies[®], or Special K[®], ¾ cup (175 mL)

Milk and Alternatives: 1 serving daily

- Milk or soy beverage, ½ cup (125 mL)
- Evaporated milk, ½ cup (125 mL), prepared with ¼ cup (60 mL) evaporated milk and ¼ cup (60 mL) distilled water
- Powdered milk, ½ cup (125 mL), prepared with 2½ Tbsp (37.5 mL) milk powder and ½ cup (125 mL) bottled water
- Non-dairy rice drink, ½ cup (125 mL)
- Pudding, ½ cup (125 mL)
- Cottage cheese, ¼ cup (60 mL)
- Yogurt, ½ cup (125 mL)
- Ice cream, ½ cup (125 mL)

Meat and Alternatives: 4 servings daily

- Egg, 1
- Meat, fish or poultry, 1 oz (30 g)
- Canned fish, ¼ cup (60 mL)
- Peanut butter, 2 Tbsp (30 mL)
- Cheese, 1 oz (30 g)

Fats and Oils: 6 or more servings daily

- Butter, margarine or vegetable oil, 1 tsp (5 mL)
- Mayonnaise or cream cheese, 1 Tbsp (15 mL)
- Salad dressing, 1 Tbsp (15 mL), limit to 1 Tbsp per day.

High calorie foods: as desired

- Hard candies, cream mints, jelly beans*
- Honey, jam, jelly, sugar*
- Pancake syrup*
- Chewing gum, gumdrops, Jujubes, marshmallows*
- Shortbread cookies, vanilla wafers, digestives, social tea biscuits, donuts

*If you have diabetes, limit or avoid these foods, or use sugar-free versions.

Condiments: as desired

- Herbs and spices
- Horseradish or Tabasco® sauce
- Lemon, lime or vinegar

Fluids: 2 servings daily (or as recommended by your dietitian)

- Water (bottled), ½ cup (125 mL)
- Coffee or tea, ½ cup (125 mL)
- Pop (non-cola; sugar free if you have diabetes), ½ cup (125 mL)
- Kool-Aid®, lemonade (sugar-free if you have diabetes) or Crystal Light®, ½ cup (125 mL)
- Apple, grape, pear, or cranberry juice, ½ cup (125 mL). Limit juice to ½ cup per day, unsweetened if you have diabetes.

Tips to save on fluid:

- Take your medications at times when you are having one of your fluid servings.
- Try taking your medications with up to ½ cup (125 mL) applesauce.
- Use a spray bottle with lemon water to mist your mouth instead of drinking if you have a dry mouth.
- Chew gum or suck on sour candies if you have a dry mouth.
- Choose low salt foods where possible. Rinse canned foods to cut down on salt.

Sample meal plan

Breakfast

½ cup (125 mL) canned fruit, drained
¾ cup (175 mL) dry cereal
2 tsp (10 mL) sugar or sugar substitute
½ cup (125 mL) milk made from powdered milk

Lunch

Sandwich made with:
2 slices bread
2 Tbsp (30 mL) peanut butter and jelly **or**
¼ cup (60 mL) canned meat or fish with
1 Tbsp (15 mL) mayonnaise
½ cup (125 mL) canned fruit, drained

Supper

Sandwich made with:
1 oz (30 g) cheese **or** ¼ cup (60 mL) canned meat
or fish with 1 Tbsp (15 mL) mayonnaise
½ cup (125 mL) fruit