

# Emergency Meal Plan for People on Hemodialysis

Going to all your dialysis treatments is important to keep you feeling healthy. There may be a time when you cannot go. For example, you may have to miss dialysis if there is an emergency or natural disaster.

Here you will find out how to:

- Be ready and know what to do if you must miss your dialysis treatment .
- Keep your blood values and fluid gains within normal limits until you can dialyze again.

## The meal plan in this handout

You can follow the meal plan in this handout for **up to 3 days** if you cannot dialyze.

**Use this meal plan in emergencies only. Do not use this in place of dialysis or your usual dialysis diet.**

**My dialysis unit phone number:**

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This meal plan limits more food than your usual diet. This plan will help you control the build-up of potassium, phosphorus, urea, and fluids. If these get too high in your blood, it can be dangerous to your life.

## Tips to help you plan for an emergency

During an emergency, your water and electricity may be cut off, keeping you from cooking your meals the usual way.

- Keep a supply of *shelf-stable* foods you know are recommended for you (low potassium, phosphorus, or sodium, as needed). *Shelf-stable* foods last a long time without spoiling, such as canned foods.
- Read the ingredient list on food packages. Choose lower sodium foods when possible. Avoid foods that contain potassium and phosphate additives.

- Check expiry dates and best before dates often. Eat the food that will expire soon. Replace food as needed.
- Buy single portion packages. For example, small cans of tuna or small containers of yogurt.
- Store some bottled water and paper or plastic plates and cutlery.

### Shelf-stable foods

- low potassium canned fruits (drained) or applesauce
- canned food (rinse before use):
  - tuna or salmon with bones removed
  - beans or lentils
  - low potassium vegetables
- dry pasta, rice, or other grains
- peanut or nut butter
- cereals: Cream of Wheat® (instant), oatmeal, cold cereals
- evaporated milk or skim milk powder

## If your water and electricity are cut off

- 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 away unused food after 4 hours.



## Emergency meal plan

Choose a daily meal plan for yourself using the following guide.

Be aware of the portion sizes that you eat so you keep within your sodium, potassium, or phosphorus limits.

If you have diabetes, then limit food and drinks with added sugars. Eat small meals and snacks more often to prevent low blood sugar reactions.

Each food in the food lists below is equal to **one serving**.

### Fluids:

**Choose 4 servings a day of ½ cup (125 mL) each** (total of 2 cups/ 500 mL a day, or as suggested by your dietitian)

- water (bottled), ½ cup (125 mL)
- coffee or tea, ½ cup (125 mL)
- rice beverage, not fortified, ½ cup (125 mL)
- pop (non-cola; sugar-free if you have diabetes), ½ cup (125 mL)
- juice: apple, grape, pear, or cranberry juice, ½ cup (125 mL). Limit to ½ cup (125 mL) juice per day, if you have diabetes.



### Tips to avoid drinking too many fluids:

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

### Vegetables and fruits:

#### Choose 4 servings a day

- apple, pear or peach, 1 small
- 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)
- 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 foods:

#### Choose 6 servings a day

- 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)
- oatmeal, Cornflakes<sup>®</sup>, Puffed Rice<sup>®</sup>, Puffed Wheat<sup>®</sup>, Rice Krispies<sup>®</sup>, or Special K<sup>®</sup>, ¾ cup (175 mL)

### Protein foods – milk, dairy, and soy:

#### Choose 1 serving a day

- 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
- homemade pudding, ½ cup (125 mL)
- cottage cheese, ¼ cup (60 mL)
- cheese, hard, 1 oz (30 g)
- yogurt, ½ cup (125 mL)

## Protein foods – beans, lentils, meat, fish, nuts, seeds:

### Choose 4 servings a day

- egg, 1
- meat, fish, or poultry, 1 oz (30 g)
- canned salmon or tuna (rinse before use), ¼ cup (60 mL)
- peanut butter, 2 Tbsp (30 mL)
- beans or lentils, ½ cup (125 mL)

## Fats and oils:

### Choose 6 servings a day

- butter, margarine, or vegetable oil, 1 tsp (5 mL)
- mayonnaise or cream cheese, 1 Tbsp (15 mL)
- salad dressing; limit to 1 Tbsp (15 mL) a day

## High calorie foods:

### Eat as desired to increase calories

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

- hard candies, mints, jelly beans\*
- honey, jam, jelly, sugar\*
- chewing gum, gumdrops, jujubes, marshmallows\*
- shortbread cookies, vanilla wafers, digestives, social tea biscuits

### If you have diabetes, make sure you have some of these items to treat low blood sugars:

- glucose tablets
- sugar, jam, candies
- low potassium fruit juices and pop

## Condiments:

### Use as desired

- herbs and spices
- lemon, lime, or vinegar
- horseradish or hot pepper sauce; limit to 1 Tbsp (15 mL)

## Sample meal plan

This meal plan is only an example of a plan you can use if you don't have electricity or water. You may change it to include the foods you usually eat, and the food you have or can get.

### Breakfast

½ cup (125 mL) canned fruit, drained  
¾ cup (175 mL) dry cereal  
Sugar or sugar substitute, if desired  
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) fish with 1 Tbsp (15 mL) mayonnaise  
½ cup (125 mL) canned fruit, drained

### Supper

Sandwich made with:  
2 slices bread  
1 oz (30 g) cheese **or** ¼ cup (60 mL) fish with  
1 Tbsp (15 mL) mayonnaise  
½ cup (125 mL) fruit  
½ cup (125 mL) raw vegetables

## More support

For emergencies, call your dialysis unit. Ask to speak with your dietitian if you have any questions about this handout. Health Link also has dietitians to answer nutrition questions. Call 811 and ask to talk to a dietitian.