

Fluid Retention (swelling) (Page 1 of 2)

What is fluid retention?

Fluid retention means your body is storing extra water. It can cause you to gain weight, even if you don't eat extra food. Fluid retention can be caused by poor nutrition, a medication, or your cancer.

Chemotherapy may cause swelling, usually in the hands, lower legs, and feet. If it occurs, it typically appears after several treatments. Generally fluid retention will go away within weeks or months after treatment is finished.

What are some of the symptoms of fluid retention?

- Feet and lower legs appear larger when you sit or walk
- Your feet, ankles, and hands look swollen. And if you press on the skin with your finger, there is an indentation that stays for a few seconds
- Swelling accompanied by hives
- Your face looks puffy
- Hands feel tight when you make a fist
- Rings are too tight
- Abdomen looks swollen and distended
- Shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing (especially when lying down)

What are some of the things you can do to manage fluid retention?

- Keep your feet elevated as much as possible
- Avoid standing for long periods of time
- Do not wear tight clothing
- Do not cross your legs
- Avoid table salt and foods that have high levels of sodium (eg, frozen meals, fast food, and processed meats)
- Weigh yourself every day. Tell your doctor if you notice any weight gain
- Your doctor may ask you to wear a Jobst stocking or TED hose
- If the problem is severe, your doctor may prescribe a medicine called a diuretic. Diuretics help your body get rid of excess fluids

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Notes: _____

Tell your doctor or nurse if your condition worsens. Talk to him or her immediately if you have any trouble breathing.

The information contained herein is not comprehensive and is intended only as a guide.

