

Hints to Help with Dehydration

The following information has been developed to help you manage dehydration. Your doctor or nurse will review this information with you and answer any questions you may have.

What is dehydration?

Dehydration occurs when your body does not have as much water and fluids as it needs. Dehydration may be caused by losing too much fluid, not drinking enough fluid, or both. Vomiting and diarrhea are common causes of dehydration.

Signs and symptoms of dehydration include:

- Dark yellow urine or decreased need to urinate
- Increased thirst, dry or sticky mouth
- Weakness, dizziness, muscle cramps
- Headaches
- Nausea

To prevent or treat dehydration:

- Drink 8 to 12 cups of fluids each day or more if any of the above symptoms occur.
- Unless advised otherwise, drink fluids like Gatorade® to replace minerals lost.
- Keep track of the fluids you are drinking. Count all liquids toward your daily fluid intake.
- Suck on popsicles or Italian ice.
- Keep crushed ice handy and take a few teaspoons every 10 minutes if you cannot take a large volume of fluid at one time.
- Eat foods high in water content such as fruits and soups.

Call your doctor if you:

- Are unable to drink fluids
- Lose two or more pounds in 1 to 2 days
- Do not urinate as often as usual and your urine looks dark yellow
- Feel dizzy, confused, or pass out

Produced by the Patient Education Department. Reviewed by Patient & Family Advisors.

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