

Hydration Management

Royal Hospital for Women

May 2020

What to do if you feel like you have symptoms of dehydration

The best course of action is prevention! Though there are many ways to improve your hydration status if you feel any symptoms of dehydration:

- Increase consumption of water, or rehydration solution (recipe below), or fruit juices
- Increase intake of foods that are high in water content
- Suck on ice chips or icy poles

How to prepare oral rehydration solution

In 1 litre of water, add:

- 6 teaspoons of sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon of salt
- 1/2 teaspoon of sodium bicarbonate
- Small splash of cordial to taste, if desired

Drink sips of the rehydration solution every 5 minutes until urination becomes normal and urine is clear and pale.

Note: If you are diabetic, pregnant or breastfeeding, please seek additional medical advice about rehydration solutions.

What to do if you continue to feel symptoms of dehydration

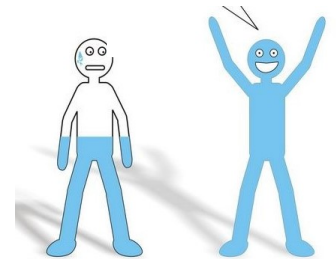
Please contact the hospital to speak to a medical professional for further advice via the Royal Hospital for Women Switchboard on (02) 9382 6111.

What is dehydration?

Dehydration occurs when the loss of body fluids, mostly water, exceeds the amount that is put in as food or fluids.

How do we lose water?

We lose water every day from our bodies through sweat, urine, stool, and in the breath that we exhale.



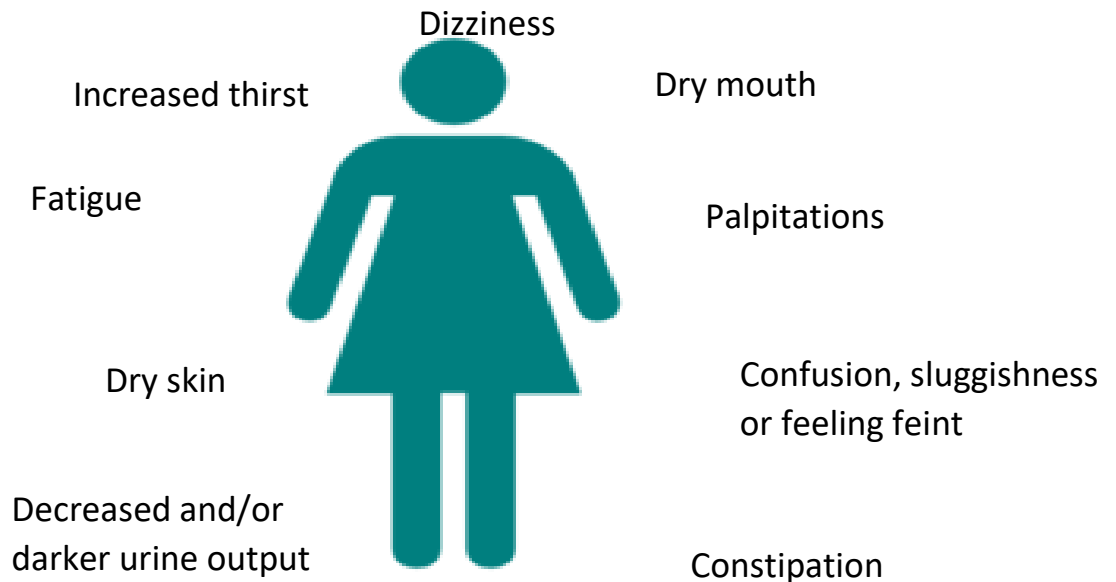
Some conditions can cause faster and continued loss of water, and may lead to dehydration. These include:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- High temperature or fever
- Altered bowel function due to various surgery such as removal of parts of bowel, or formation of high output stomas
- Heat exposure
- Disease such as diabetes
- High intensity exercise

Why is it important to stay hydrated?

Water helps your body perform vital functions, and to carry nutrients to cells. It helps to remove waste products and regulate body temperature. Excess loss of water can lead to dehydration. Mild dehydration and poor fluid intake can alter electrolyte balance, increase risk of kidney stones and constipation. Severe dehydration can be life threatening.

Signs of dehydration



How much should I be drinking?

The National Health and Medical Research Council (2014) recommends that women aged 19 years and over, who are not pregnant or lactating, drink 2.1 litre of fluid per day (approximately 8 cups) – prevention is key!

Sources of fluid other than water can include an oral rehydration solution, juices, soups, yoghurts, jellies, and fruits and vegetables that are high in water content such as grapes, watermelon, zucchini and celery

It is important to note that some drinks, such as caffeinated drinks (tea, coffee etc.) and alcohol are not hydrating, and can actually be dehydrating.

NB: for those with high output stomas that have >1.5L of output per day, it is more effective to drink rehydration solution, and to avoid large amounts of hypotonic fluids such as water and fruit juice



Acknowledge Salts Healthcare

Endorsed May 2020. Reviewed by consumers in development stage April 2020. Should you wish to discuss any aspect of this information please send an email RHWfeedback@health.nsw.gov.au