Dehydration - Adult

Dehydration is the reduction of water and fluid from the body to a level below that required for proper functioning.

CAUSES

- Throwing up (*vomiting*).
- Diarrhea.
- Heat illness.
- Fever.
- Infections.
- Not drinking enough water.
- Drinking too much alcohol.
- Diabetes.
- Use of water pills (*diuretics*).

SYMPTOMS

- Dry mouth.
- Thick saliva.
- Dizziness.
- Weakness.
- Fainting.
- Decreased urine.

TREATMENT

- When dehydration is severe, fluids may be given by intravenous (IV) access or stomach tube.
- Medicines to control vomiting or diarrhea may be given.
- Sometimes, hospital care is needed to replace water and salt in the body.

Untreated dehydration can lead to shock, severe kidney damage, and death.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Drink enough water and fluids to keep your urine clear or pale yellow. Ice chips, frozen ice pops, sports drinks, pops or sodas, and fruit juices can all be helpful.
- Rest.
- Medicine may be needed to control fever or water losses. Only take medicine as directed by your caregiver.
- Once your water and salt balance is restored, a regular diet should keep you from getting dehydrated.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have repeated vomiting or diarrhea, severe weakness, or fainting.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).
- You have belly (*abdominal*) or chest pain, bloating, or bleeding problems.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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