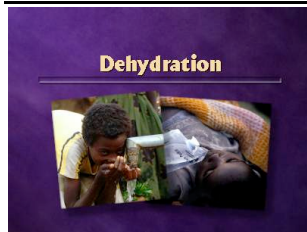


Dehydration



©CARE 1995; ©Malcolm Linton

If someone offered you a medicine that could cure or prevent many sicknesses, would you be interested? For most of us, drinking plenty of water would be better than a medicine.



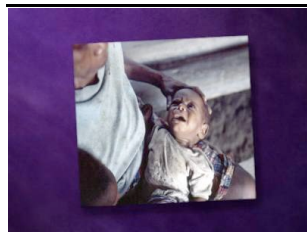
©GC/Sabbath School Department; ©Corbis #DTR069

Did you know that your body is nearly 70% water?¹ We can live only a few days without it. Today we want to talk about the importance of keeping plenty of water in our bodies.



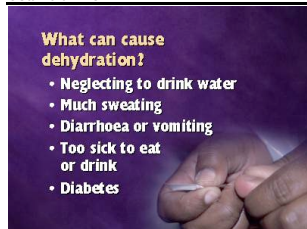
©Chris Brevig

We lose water every day in our sweat, urine, stools, and even from breathing. Because of this we need to drink water to make up for what we lose. If we don't do this we will become dehydrated, which means that our bodies will be too dry, with too little water.



©Stanford/PNGMP

Dehydration can very dangerous, especially in children. It kills many people every day.



©Panorama Productions; Chris Brevig; George Sedupane; WHO/Pierre Virost #PIC0066; Viriato Ferreira

What can cause dehydration?

- ➔ **Neglecting to drink water.** Probably the most common cause is simply that we don't drink enough water. By the time you are thirsty, your body already has too little water.
- ➔ **Much sweating.** It is normal to sweat, especially in hot climates. But the water lost must be replaced.
- ➔ **Diarrhoea or vomiting.** Having many loose stools or much vomiting, removes a lot of fluid or water from the body. That water must be added back by drinking.
- ➔ **Too sick to eat or drink.** Sometimes when we are sick we don't feel like drinking anything. But we should not depend upon feelings; drinking water, even if we can only take little sips, is important to our healing.
- ➔ **Diabetes.** People who have diabetes often pass a lot of urine. This can make them dehydrated more easily.

If we want to be healthy and not have our body become dry, we need to drink plenty of water.

Dehydration

Recognizing Dehydration

- Thirst
- Little urine
- Dry mouth
- Sudden loss of weight



©Inter American Development Bank;
WHO/TDR/Crump #99021193; Chris Brevig;
Panorama Productions

How can we know if a person is dehydrated?

These are the main signs:^{2 3}

- ➔ Thirst
- ➔ Little or no urine (dark yellow)
- ➔ Dry mouth (and)
- ➔ Sudden loss of weight

Additional Signs

- Eyes sunken
- Feel sleepy
- Skin response slow
- Soft spot goes inwards



©Viriato Ferreira; Inter American Development Bank; Wildwood Lifestyle Center

As the sick person continues to lose more liquid and does not drink enough water there are additional signs:

- ➔ Eyes become sunken and dry
- ➔ Person becomes sleepy or drowsy
- ➔ Skin goes back slowly when pinched (especially on children)
- ➔ (and in babies the) Soft spot (on top of the head) goes inwards



©Worldbank #YE017S17

When one is vomiting or has diarrhoea, dehydration can become quite serious.

Preventing Dehydration

- Act quickly
- Give lots of liquids
- Continue breastfeeding



©JHU/CCP #3651-44; FAO/A. Conti #17886;
WHO/TDR/Crump #98031076; Malcolm Linton

Dehydration can quickly lead to **death**, especially in small children. For this reason we must do all we can to prevent it.

- ➔ Act quickly!
- ➔ Give lots of liquids to drink
- ➔ Continue breastfeeding (if your baby has Diarrhoea or vomiting)

Drink special water



©Wildwood Lifestyle Center

Watery stools aren't just water. They have some sugar and salts mixed with them. Because of this, when a person has Diarrhoea, the best drink is water with a little bit of sugar and salt mixed in. This is called a "Rehydration Drink" The water, sugar and salt all help to bring the body back into balance.

Rehydration Drink



©Hemera Technologies; Jerilyn Ah Sam

It is very easy to make a Rehydration Drink at home.⁴

Mix together:

- ➔ One litre of clean water
- ➔ Half a level teaspoon of salt and

Dehydration

➡ 8 level teaspoons of sugar or molasses



©Chris Brevig

If you can, add half a cup of coconut water, orange juice or mashed ripe banana to each litre.⁵ These all have a lot of potassium, one of the salts lost in vomiting and diarrhoea.

Other Alternatives

- Powdered rice
- Maize flour
- Wheat flour
- Sorghum flour
- Cooked and mashed potatoes



©Adventist Frontier Missions; Corbis #OFI0053; Hemera Technologies; Jerilyn Ah Sam

This drink can be made differently depending on what is available.⁶ You can use any of the following cereals instead of the sugar:

- ➡ Powdered rice
- ➡ Maize flour (mealie meal-finely ground)
- ➡ Wheat flour
- ➡ Sorghum flour (or)
- ➡ Cooked and mashed potatoes

Cereal Rehydration Drink



©Hemera Technologies; ©Jerilyn Ah Sam; ©Wildwood Lifestyle Center

If you use a cereal, each of the eight spoons must be heaped; and remember to add half a teaspoon of salt.



©Adventist Frontier Missions

After mixing everything, the drink must be boiled for 5-7 minutes to form a soup or watery porridge. Cool it before drinking.

Keep cool
and covered



©Jerilyn Ah Sam

The prepared drink should be kept in a cool place and covered to protect it from flies and dust.

Use same day



©WHO/TDR/Morena #9101083

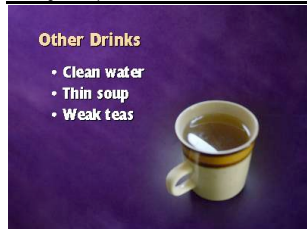
Use the fluid on the day it is prepared. Throw away any leftover drink from the day before.

Dehydration



©George Sedupane

“Rehydration drink” packets may also be available at your clinic. You should use it as soon as someone has watery diarrhoea.



©Malcolm Linton; Jerilyn Ah Sam

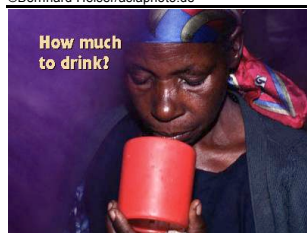
If you can't make “Rehydration Drink,” and your clinic does not have the packets, drink:

- ➡ Clean water
- ➡ Thin soup (or)
- ➡ Weak teas (make sure it is not a tea for constipation)



©Bernhard Heiser/asiaphoto.de

Sweet drinks like Coca-Cola, Seven-Up and Fanta are **not** the best because they have too much sugar.



©WHO/TDR/Crump #9603818

If you have diarrhoea, how much should you drink to prevent dehydration?

Give as much as the person can take.



©Corel #260040; Panorama Productions

A large person needs three or more litres a day.

➡ A small child usually needs at least one litre a day, or one glass for each watery stool.⁷



©Malcolm Linton

If vomiting, take little amounts every 5-10 minutes day and night. Large amounts may make vomiting worse. For children give 2-3 small spoonfuls from a cup, wait five minutes, then give some more. Even if the person vomits don't stop giving the drink.



©Adventist Frontier Missions

Dehydration



©Viriato Ferreira

If a child with diarrhoea is breastfeeding, continue. Breast milk is safe, clean, and nourishing. Drinks of rehydration liquid should be given between breastfeeding.⁹



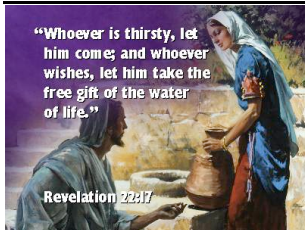
©Adventist Frontier Missions

If dehydration gets worse at any time, even with treatment, **go for medical help.**



©CARE 1995/CARE Photo

As we can see, water is vital to prevent the dangers of dehydration. Train yourself and your family to enjoy drinking lots of water when they are well and also when they are sick.



©Adventist Digital Media

The Bible uses water to teach both physical and spiritual lessons. To those who are thirsting to know God and experience true happiness, Jesus offers to freely give the water of life.



He says, "Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life."
Revelation 22:17 (NIV)

As you receive the Spiritual water of life, may you also enjoy all the physical benefits from drinking plenty of good water.

-
- 1 Aileen Ludington, MD, Hans Diehl, DrHSc, MPH, Health Power, Review and Herald Pub. Assoc. 2000, p. 191.
 - 2 Werner, D. *Where There Is No doctor*, The Hesperian Foundation, 1999 p.151
 - 3 Heese, H. *Handbook of Pediatrics*, Oxford Southern Africa, 1997 p.220-223
 - 4 Werner, D. *Where There Is No doctor*, The Hesperian Foundation, 1999 p.152
 - 5 Werner, D. *Where There Is No doctor*, The Hesperian Foundation, 1999 p.152
 - 6 Werner, D. *Where There Is No doctor*, The Hesperian Foundation, 1999 p.152
 - 7 Werner, D. *Where There Is No doctor*, The Hesperian Foundation, 1999 p.152
 - 8 Guidelines for Training Community Health Workers in Nutrition, 2nd ed., WHO, 1990, p. 104
 - 9 Guidelines for Training Community Health Workers in Nutrition, 2nd ed., WHO, 1990, p. 104