

Preventing Dehydration after Ileostomy Surgery

What is dehydration?

Dehydration happens when your body loses too much fluid. This might happen when you do not drink enough water or you lose large amounts of fluids from your ileostomy. Dehydration is one of the most common reasons to return to the hospital after surgery and can be life-threatening.

After discharge from your operation, it is a good idea to record your liquid intake and urine output each day until your first clinic appointment after surgery.

How should I measure intake?

All liquids should be recorded in “cc” or “ml”, which are the same amount (1cc is equal to 1ml).

- To convert an ounce (oz.) to a “cc” or “ml”, multiply the number of ounces by 30 (1 ounce is equal 30 cc/ml). You can also google: “convert xx oz to ml” to help with the calculation.
- Look for the number of cc, ml, or ounces on the containers of drinks you buy at the store.
- Drink 1500 ml more than ostomy output every day.
- Best drink choices are:
 - Gatorade or sport drinks
 - Juices
 - Tea (non-caffeine drinks only)
 - Protein drinks such as: Boost®, Ensure® or Carnation® instant shakes

How should I measure output?

We will provide you with at least two measuring devices upon discharge:

Ostomy Steering Committee

For males:

- For measurement of urine: a urinal and white “hat”
- For measurement of ostomy output: two triangular containers.

For females:

- For measurement of urine: two white “hats”
- For measurement of ostomy output: two triangular containers.

You can use a household measuring cup as well.

What should my ostomy output be like?

Normal ostomy output is like the consistency of oatmeal. It should not be more than 1500 ml per day. The color can vary, but if your output looks like blood call us immediately.

If the ostomy output becomes thin like water, add **bread, pasta, potatoes, bananas or rice** to your diet. This will help thicken the output. Your health care provider might have also instructed you to take medications, like a fiber supplement or Imodium, to thicken your ostomy output.

If your ostomy output is less than 300ml in a day, your stool may be too thick. Contact the surgery clinic for directions on how to adjust your medication and diet.

What should my urine output be like?

The color of your urine output should be pale yellow. If urine is amber in color, you need to drink more fluid. Normal urine output is approximately 1000ml every 24 hours.

What are the signs of dehydration?

- Dizziness
- Feeling light headed
- Nausea
- Dark yellow or amber-colored urine
- Less than 500ml of urine in 12 hours
- Ostomy output greater than 1500ml in 24 hours

If you feel any signs of dehydration, you need to drink more fluid and call the surgery clinic immediately.

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by UMHS and for which UMHS does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

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Intake and Output Log

Date: _____

| Time | Liquid Intake – type and amount | Stoma Output | Urine Output | Comments/Appearance |
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| 8-hr totals | | | | |
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| 12-hr totals | | | | |
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| 16-hr totals | | | | |
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| 24-hr totals | | | | |