

Discharge Instructions for Hypernatremia (Child)



Your child has been diagnosed with hypernatremia. This means there is too much sodium in their blood. It can be caused by a high salt intake. But it's more often due to fluid loss. Loss of too much fluid can occur if the kidneys excrete too much urine. This is called polyuria. Fluid loss can also be caused by excessive sweating. This can happen during hot weather or exercise. It can be caused by diarrhea or vomiting. It can also be caused if your child does not drink enough water. If not treated right away, it can cause a seizure or a loss of consciousness. It can also lead to death.

Symptoms of hypernatremia include:

- Extreme thirst
- Fatigue
- Confusion
- Low blood pressure

Diet changes

Check nutrition facts labels for sodium content and don't let your child eat foods high in sodium, such as:

- Canned soups
- Canned beans
- Frozen dinners
- Commercially prepared tomato sauce and spaghetti sauce
- Pizza
- Potato and corn chips
- Salted pretzels and crackers
- Olives
- Pickles
- Sauerkraut
- Soy sauce
- Cottage cheese
- Canned chili and stew
- Lunch meats
- Processed meats, such as hot dogs and salami
- Instant hot cereals
- Quick breads made with baking soda or baking powder, including pancakes, biscuits, waffles, and muffins

- Packaged dessert mixes

Home care

- Have your child drink more fluids as advised.
- Have your child's sodium levels checked as often as advised by your healthcare provider. This is very important if your child takes a diuretic. This is a medicine that helps flush water from the body.
- Replace your child's body fluids after vomiting or diarrhea. Ask your healthcare provider for the best way to do this.
- Tell your healthcare provider about all medicine your child is taking. This includes both prescribed and over-the-counter medicine. Some of these can raise sodium levels.
- Have your child take all medicines as directed.

Follow-up care

Follow up with your healthcare provider, or as advised. The healthcare provider will need to watch your child's condition closely. Your child may need extra care if they have a health condition that causes the hypernatremia.

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your child's healthcare provider right away if any of the following occur:

- Muscle twitching, spasms, or cramps
- Fatigue
- Confusion
- Loss of consciousness or fainting
- Dizziness or lightheadedness

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