

To help lessen flu symptoms: Hydration

What are signs of dehydration (not having enough fluids)?

Signs of dehydration include:

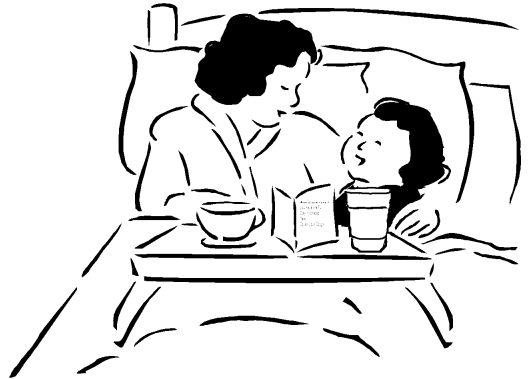
- being thirsty, having a dry mouth
- little or no urine output
- sleepiness or irritability
- dark urine
- sunken or tearless eyes
- looking flushed
- headache
- a change in breathing or pulse
- weakness or dizziness made worse by standing
- in infants, a sunken “soft spot” on their head

If there is decreased alertness or change in consciousness, call 911 or go to clinic right away!

How do I get enough fluids?

The higher the fever, the more cool liquids – especially water – should be consumed. Adults should have about 8-12 cups or ½ gallon of fluids a day. Broth, juice, or an oral re-hydration drink (see back side) formula are suggested.

Sports drinks should be avoided as they have too much sugar and not enough electrolyte.



What about fluids for children?

Children should have about 4 cups of fluid a day.

Children that have **diarrhea** and **are able to drink** fluids, should have milk, formula, or water. Drinks with sugar or fruit may make diarrhea last longer or worse.

Children that have a **high fever** and **are vomiting**, should have an oral re-hydration drink (see back side) or Pedialyte.

Sports drinks should be avoided as they have too much sugar and not enough electrolyte.

What else can I do?

Place cold compresses on the person’s forehead, give him or her a lukewarm sponge bath and check his or her temperature every 20 minutes. If they become chilled or start shaking, stop the compresses or sponge and wrap for warmth.

Oral re-hydration drink

When making drinks, please remember:

- Too much salt can be harmful. The drink should taste no saltier than tears.
- Too much sugar will make diarrhea worse.
- Store the drink in a cool place.
- If the drink is needed after 24 hours, make a new batch.

For Adults:

- 5 cupfuls drinking water
 - ½ TEAspoon baking soda
 - ½ TEAspoon table salt
 - 3 - 4 tablespoons sugar or honey
- Mix well & flavor with lemon juice, sugar-free kool aid, or gelatin.

For Children without diarrhea:

- 5 cupfuls drinking water
 - 1/4 TEAspoon baking soda
 - 1/4 TEAspoon table salt
 - 2 tablespoons sugar
- Mix well & flavor with lemon juice, sugar-free kool aid, or gelatin.

How much drink do I give?

At each feeding, give a child less than 2 years old between a quarter and a half of a large cup.

At each feeding, give older children between a half and a whole large cup.

A person or child that is very dehydrated may need to drink sips of the drink every 5 minutes until urination is normal. It is normal to urinate 4-5 times a day.

How do I give the drink?

Give the drink slowly, preferably with a TEAspoon.

The drink should be given from a cup – bottles are hard to clean properly.

If a person vomits, the person should try drinking again as soon as he or she feels like it. Give a smaller amount the next time. The body will hold onto some of the fluids and salts even though there is vomiting.



What else should I know?

Wash your hands with soap and water before making drink.

Stir the drink mixture till all the contents dissolve.

Wash your hands and child's hands before feeding drink.

Give the sick person as much of the drink as she or he needs, in small amounts frequently.

Have other fluids. For children, use breast milk, formula, milk, or water. For adults, use broth, water, or tea.

In persons older than 6 months, have solid foods.

If diarrhea increases and/or vomiting continues, take the person to the clinic.

References:

1. American Red Cross. <http://www.redcrossstl.org/Portals/0/Pandemic%20Flyer%208-22-06.pdf>
2. Rehydration Project. <http://rehydrate.org/ors/made-at-home.htm>. August 2009.