

How to Manage High Ostomy Output

High ostomy output, more than 1200 mL a day, may cause you to be unable to absorb fluids and nutrients and can cause dehydration. Normal output for your ostomy is 600 to 800 mL each day. It is important to check the output of your ostomy each day and watch for signs of dehydration.

Signs of dehydration may include:

- Feeling dizzy, weak or lightheaded
- Headaches
- Thirst or dry mouth
- Dark colored urine
- Decrease in urine output
- Nausea
- Muscle cramps

Call your health care provider or ostomy nurse if you have any signs of dehydration. It is important to check your weight and output from your ostomy each day. Use the Ostomy Output Log on the last page of this handout to record your weight and output. **Call your health care provider or ostomy nurse if your daily output is more than 1200 mL or if you lose more than 2.2 pounds in a week.**

Medicine to Help Manage High Ostomy Output

Your health care provider may have ordered medicine (Loperamide) to help reduce your ostomy output and help increase your absorption of fluid and nutrients. It is important to take this medicine as ordered by your health care provider. Talk to your health care provider before you change your dose or stop taking this medicine. Take this medicine 30 minutes before each meal or snack and before you go to bed.

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

Diet to Help Manage High Ostomy Output

To manage your ostomy output, it may help to make changes to your diet. Talk to your health care provider, nurse, or dietitian about your diet and fluid needs. The following diet guidelines may help to lower your ostomy output:

- Eat small meals or snacks during the day
- Eat high-salt foods and add salt to your meals and snacks
- Eat foods with more soluble fiber such as, oatmeal, barley, applesauce, and sweet potatoes. It may help to use Benefiber or Metamucil.
- Stay away from high-sugar foods and sugar-sweetened drinks
- Stay away from alcohol and caffeine

Other Tips to Help Manage High Ostomy Output

Normal output for your ostomy is 600 to 800 mL each day. With normal output, you will need to empty your pouch 5 to 7 times each day.

If you have had watery output for more than 12 hours, the following tips may help:

- Eat certain foods, such as applesauce, bananas, cheese, mashed potatoes, peanut butter and soda crackers, to thicken stools and control output.
- **Do not** drink fluids with your meals. Drink fluids 30 minutes before or after meals.
- Drink liquid electrolyte solutions, such as Pedialyte.
- If ordered, take Loperamide (1 to 2 caplets) 30 minutes before each meal and snack, and before you go to bed.
- Check the color of your urine. If you are hydrated, your urine should be light yellow in color.

If you have had watery output for more than 24 hours, choose one of the recipes below and follow the directions to make a rehydration solution at home. Drink 1 liter of the solution over the next 24 hours. After you mix the solution, refrigerate any leftovers.

Rehydration Solution Recipes			
Sugar and Salt Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 quart water • ¾ teaspoon salt • 6 teaspoons sugar • You can add low-sugar, powdered drink mixes (such as Crystal Light) to help improve the taste. 		
Gatorade G2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 cups (32 ounces) Gatorade G2 • ¾ teaspoon salt 		
Chicken Broth (2 options, choose 1)	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tbody> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 cups water • 1 dry chicken broth cube • ¼ teaspoon salt • 2 tablespoons sugar </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 cups water • 2 cups liquid broth • 2 tablespoons sugar </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 cups water • 1 dry chicken broth cube • ¼ teaspoon salt • 2 tablespoons sugar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 cups water • 2 cups liquid broth • 2 tablespoons sugar
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Tomato Juice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 ½ cups water • 2 ½ cups tomato juice 		
Cereal-based	<p>Mix ingredients until dissolved and smooth. The solution will be thick, but you will be able to pour and drink it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 cups water • ½ cup dry, precooked baby rice cereal • ¼ teaspoon salt 		

Ostomy Output Log

Use the log below to record your weight and the output from your ostomy each day. It is important to weigh yourself around the same time each day. **Call your health care provider if your daily output is more than 1200 mL or if you lose more than 2.2 pounds in a week.**

Bring this record log with you to all of your appointments.

Date	Weight	Ostomy Output (mL)

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