

Signs of Dehydration

Go to the nearest Emergency

Department right away if you have:

- › Extreme thirst
- › You have not urinated (peed) for 8 to 12 hours
- › Moderate diarrhea for 5 or more days
- › Severe (very bad) diarrhea for 2 or more days
- › Vomiting for more than 12 to 24 hours
- › Confusion
- › More drowsy (sleepy)
- › Seizure
- › High blood sugar that is not controlled

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:
<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Prepared by: Nutrition and Food Services
Designed by: Nova Scotia Health Library Services

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.

Dietitian: _____

Phone: _____

Signs of Dehydration

Dehydration means that your body does not have enough fluid. This can be caused by:

- > not drinking enough fluid
- > severe (very bad) sweating
- > vomiting (throwing up)
- > fever
- > high blood sugar
- > diarrhea (loose, watery poop)

Signs of mild to moderate dehydration:

- > thirst
- > cracked lips
- > headache
- > feeling agitated and restless
- > peeing less
- > feeling dizzy and lightheaded
- > dark urine (pee)
- > strong smelling urine
- > tiredness
- > dry, sticky mouth
- > muscle weakness

My total daily fluid goal is:

Tips for staying hydrated

- How much fluid you need depends on your age, activity, medications, and health condition.
- You may need to drink more fluids when you are more active, when you have a fever, or during hot weather.
- Checking the colour of your urine is the best way to check for dehydration. Your urine should be clear and pale yellow.
- Drink fluids regularly during the day. If you drink a lot at once, your kidneys will flush the extra fluid away.
- Water is the best drink for getting enough fluid. Other fluids include:
 - > all hot and cold beverages
 - > frozen desserts like Popsicles®, ice cream, or sorbet
 - > ice cubes
 - > soups, consommé, broth
 - > very juicy fruit like watermelon, very ripe melons, berries, ripe peaches, frozen fruit
- Alcoholic drinks cause you to urinate more fluid than you drink. **Do not** drink alcohol when you are trying to reach your daily fluid goal.
- Drinking too many drinks with caffeine can prevent you from meeting your daily fluid goal. **Do not** drink more coffee, tea, or cola than usual.
- **Do not** drink energy drinks.