

## Increasing Fluid Intake

It is very important to drink plenty of fluids when you are receiving cancer treatment. You may need to drink even when you are not thirsty. Drink at least 8 to 10 cups (2 – 2 ½ litres) of fluid daily.

### Recommendations

- Drink fluids throughout the day, such as:
  - Water, sparkling water, juice, soups, popsicles, caffeine-free soft drinks, tea, smoothies. Choose calorie containing fluids if you are eating little else.
- Carry a water bottle with you
- Limit caffeine or alcohol containing beverages.
- Drink most of your fluids between meals so you will not be replacing food with fluid.

### High Calorie Fluid Ideas

- Carnation Breakfast Essentials® or other breakfast or protein shakes.
- Meal replacement drinks (Boost Plus®, Ensure Plus®, or any store brand high calorie meal replacement drink®)
- 2%, whole (3.25%) or chocolate milk
- Soy milk or other milk alternatives
- Milkshakes or fruit smoothies
- Yogurt drink or Kefir
- Pasteurized Eggnog (store bought)
- Hot chocolate or café au lait
- Ovaltine® or Postum® made with milk
- Strained or blended soups
- Juices or nectars such as carrot, grape, apple, pear, guava, peach, apricot, cherry or lychee (diluted if necessary)
- Iced tea or fruit flavoured drinks such as Kool Aid®
- Carbonated drinks
- Popsicles, sherbet, ice cream, frozen yogurt bars
- Boost Fruit Beverage or Boost Soothe

## Signs of dehydration

If you are unable to consume enough fluids you may experience dehydration. If you have the following signs of dehydration, let your health care provider know immediately:

- Smaller amounts of dark yellow or amber-colored urine (pee)
- Dizziness when standing or sitting up
- Rapid weight loss
- Increased thirst

## What about sports drinks and electrolytes?

Most cases of dehydration can be treated with drinking more fluids. If you are experiencing vomiting or diarrhea, you may require drinking fluid with additional sugar and salt. You can include foods and liquids that help replace electrolytes in your body.

- Have more sodium-rich foods such as broths, soups, salted crackers, and pretzels. Add extra salt in your cooking.
- Have more potassium-rich foods such as potatoes, bananas, and yogurt.
- Include electrolyte-containing liquids such as coconut water, diluted juices (tomato, apricot, orange), broths, electrolyte replacement drinks (i.e. Gatorade®, Powerade®, Nuun®, Pedialyte®, Gastrolyte®, Hydrolyte®)
  - Note: Diet or sugar free versions of sports drinks like Gatorade®, Sportade®, Powerade® may cause diarrhea
- Oral rehydration solutions can be used to treat dehydration, especially due to diarrhea or vomiting. It involves a mixture of water, glucose and salts. Sip on any of these recipes below.

## Oral Hydration Recipes

Mix all ingredients until completely dissolved.

### Homemade Recipe

- 1 Litre of water (4 cups)
- 250mL of orange juice (1 cup)
- 8 teaspoons of sugar
- 1/2 tsp of baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon of salt

### **Gatorade Base**

- 500mL of Gatorade (2 cups)
- 500mL of water (2 cups)
- ½ teaspoon of salt

### **Sugar and Salt Water**

- 1 Litre of water (4 cups)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 6 teaspoons of sugar ( can add Crystal Light to flavour - especially lemonade or orange- pineapple flavours)

### **Chicken or Vegetable Broth**

- 1L of water (4 cups)
- 1 dry chicken broth or vegetable cube
- ¼ teaspoon table salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar

OR

- 500mL liquid broth, not low sodium (2 cups)
- 500mL water (2 cups)
- 2 tablespoons sugar

### **Boost Fruit Beverage**

- 237mL (1 tetra pak) Boost fruit beverage
- 750 mL water (3 cups)
- ½ teaspoon of salt

**If you find these drinks too salty, dilute slightly with water to adjust to the taste.**

**It is best if you sip these drinks. Do not gulp. This will help the water absorb better.**

**If you have tried these ideas and you are unable to maintain your hydration, ask a member of your care team to refer you to a dietitian.**

Visit our website: [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)

This information is not meant to replace the medical counsel of your doctor or individual consultation with a registered dietitian. This information may only be used in its entirety

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