

Nutrition for a High Output Ostomy

A **high output ostomy** is an ostomy with an output of more than 1000 to 1500 mL per day. This means you may be losing too much water and you may not be absorbing nutrients well. See the tips below to help slow the output.

Fluid

- Drink **at least 9 cups (2250 mL)** of total fluid per day.
- Most of your fluids should be oral rehydration solution (ORS). You can buy an ORS at most pharmacies. You can also try one of the homemade recipes listed on page 2.
- If you can tolerate most of your fluid intake as ORS, try to limit regular fluids such as water, tea, coffee, milk, sweet drinks, juice, and broth to 2 cups (500 mL) per day.
- Watch for symptoms of dehydration such as:
 - dry mouth
 - dry skin
 - headaches
 - feeling thirsty
 - feeling dizzy
 - muscle cramping
 - nausea
 - low blood pressure
 - low urine output or dark urine
 - weight loss
- If you have signs of dehydration see *Oral rehydration solutions* on page 2.

High sugar foods and drinks

- Avoid foods high in sugar, such as:
 - dried fruit
 - fruit canned in syrup
 - highly sweetened yogurt
 - sugary cereals
 - sweet desserts
 - candy, chocolate
- Avoid drinks high in sugar, such as:
 - chocolate or flavoured milk
 - fruit juices
 - fruit punch
 - Kool-Aid®
 - regular pop and sports drinks
 - yogurt drinks

- Regular sports drinks are high in sugar. They are not the best fluid choice when you have a high output ostomy. Instead, see *Oral rehydration solution recipes* on page 2.

Fibre

- **Soluble fibre** in foods can absorb liquid and thicken stool. Eat foods high in soluble fibre such as:
 - barley
 - beans
 - cooked carrots
 - fruits like peeled apples, pears, oranges without the membranes, bananas, and applesauce
 - lentils
 - oat bran
 - oatmeal
 - potatoes
 - supplements like Benefibre® or Metamucil®
- **Insoluble fibre** in foods can increase ostomy output. Avoid foods high in insoluble fibre such as:
 - dried fruit
 - nuts and seeds
 - skins on fruits and vegetables
 - wheat bran
 - whole wheat

Other things to think about

- **Potassium.** A high output ostomy removes potassium from the body. Vegetables and fruit are the best sources of potassium.
- **Sodium.** A high output ostomy removes sodium (salt) from the body. Replace the sodium that is lost by adding salt to your meals and eating higher sodium foods, such as:
 - canned beans
 - canned soups
 - canned vegetables
 - pretzels
 - processed cheese
 - processed meats
 - salted crackers
 - tomato and vegetable juices

- If nutrition supplement drinks like Ensure[®] or Boost[®] seem to increase the output, they may need to be diluted to half strength with water or milk. For example, mix 1 cup (250 mL) of nutrition supplement drink with 1 cup (250 mL) of milk.
- Don't drink alcohol.
- You may need a liquid or chewable multivitamin and mineral supplement until the output slows to normal (about 600 mL per day). Ask your healthcare provider about this.
- Once the output has slowed to normal you can follow your regular diet.

If your output is greater than 2000 mL per day, you should talk to your doctor or healthcare provider. You may need to go to the hospital.

Oral rehydration solutions

If you have signs of dehydration, drink or sip oral rehydration solutions throughout the day to help meet your fluid needs.

You can buy ORS at most pharmacies.

You can make an ORS at home using the recipes below. **Ask your doctor or dietitian whether making your own solution is right for you.**

Homemade ORS recipes

World Health Organization (WHO) recipe

4 cups	water	1 litre
½ tsp	salt	2 mL
½ tsp	No Salt [®]	2 mL
8 tsp	sugar	40 mL
½ tsp	baking soda	2 mL

Mix all the ingredients.

Makes 4 cups (1 litre).

Each 1 cup (250 mL) serving provides:

- 32 calories
- 455 mg sodium
- 9 g carbohydrate
- 390 mg potassium

Sports drink recipe* – 1 litre

4 cups	Gatorade 2 (G2) [®]	1 litre
¾ tsp	salt	3.75 mL

Mix all the ingredients.

Makes 4 cups (1 litre).

Each 1 cup (250 mL) serving provides:

- 21 calories
- 558 mg sodium
- 5 g carbohydrate
- 32 mg potassium

Sports drink recipe* – 591 mL bottle

591 mL	Gatorade 2 (G2) [®]	591 mL
½ tsp	salt	2 mL

Mix all the ingredients.

Makes 591 mL.

Each 1 cup (250 mL) serving provides:

- 21 calories
- 559 mg sodium
- 5 g carbohydrate
- 32 mg potassium

Orange juice recipe*

4 cups	water	1 litre
1 cup	orange juice	250 mL
½ tsp	baking soda	2 mL
½ tsp	salt	2 mL

Mix all the ingredients.

Makes 5 cups (1.25 litres).

Each 1 cup (250 mL) serving provides:

- 22 calories
- 365 mg sodium
- 5 g carbohydrate
- 95 mg potassium

*Recipes adapted from Parrish CR. The clinician's guide to short bowel syndrome. Practical Gastroenterology. 2005;29(9):67-106.