

# DEHYDRATION. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



When your body doesn't have enough of the water and fluids it needs to function properly, you can become dehydrated. Dehydration is caused by losing too much fluid, not drinking enough or both. This happens when you sweat a lot, have a fever, vomit or have diarrhea, or urinate excessively (many times due to uncontrolled diabetes or diuretic use).

## What are the signs and symptoms of dehydration?

- Dry mouth
- No tears
- Sunken eyes
- Low blood pressure
- Rapid heart rate
- Shock
- Low or no urine

## Treating dehydration

When dehydration is detected and treated quickly, the outcome is usually good. It's always important to call your doctor when you notice any signs or symptoms.

Here are some common treatments:

- For mild dehydration, drinking fluids is usually enough. It's better to drink small amounts often (using a teaspoon or syringe for an infant or child), instead of trying to force large amounts all at once.
- Electrolyte solutions or freezer pops are very effective, especially for infants and children. Remember: sports drinks contain a lot of sugar and can cause or worsen diarrhea.
- For moderate to severe dehydration, intravenous fluids and a hospital stay may be necessary. While there, your doctor will try to identify and then treat the cause.
- For stomach viruses (also called viral gastroenteritis), you just need to wait it out since most people get better on their own after a few days.

For more information on ways to get healthy and stay healthy, visit [myCigna.com](http://myCigna.com)

Source: [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001977](http://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001977)

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