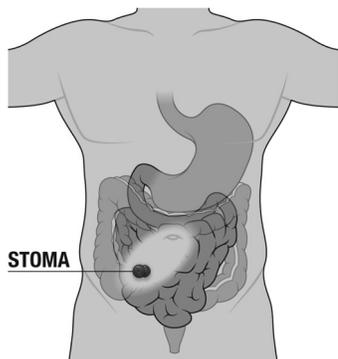


It is very important to get enough liquid.

- Not getting enough liquid can cause long-lasting health problems.
- If you do not get enough liquid, you may have to go to the emergency room.
- You may have to stay in the hospital again. If you do, the stay is usually longer than when you had the surgery.
- You might need more surgery.

Dehydration means your body loses more liquid than you take in. When this happens, your body doesn't have enough water and other liquids to work right.

Normally, the large intestine takes water back into your body from food waste going through it. Your ileostomy keeps food and liquid from getting in the large intestine. Water cannot return to your body. It's easy for you to get dehydrated. Be careful to drink enough liquids.



An ileostomy makes an opening in the belly. The opening is called a stoma. The stoma lets waste move out of your body when the colon or rectum isn't working right. It also keeps food and water from getting in the large intestine.

How do I make sure I get enough liquids?

Drink 8 to 10 eight-ounce glasses of liquids every day. Be sure to include drinks such as Gatorade or Powerade, especially during hot weather.

Keep track of how much fluid you take in (intake) and how much waste you put out (output). While you are in the hospital after your surgery, the nurse will teach you how to track these things.

Keep a record of your intake and output on the tracking pages. Show the pages to your home health nurse. Bring the sheets to your follow-up appointments with the ostomy nurse and surgeon.

Signs of Dehydration

Here are some signs of dehydration:

- Dry mouth or tongue
- Dark-colored urine
- Less frequent urination
- Weakness or dizziness when you stand
- Cramps in the belly and legs
- Feeling confused

When to Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor right away if any of these things happen

- If you have any signs of dehydration.
- If stool output is ever less than 16 ounces in 24 hours.
- If your stool output continues to be more than 40 ounces in 24 hours after doing these things:
 - On the first day the stool output is more than 40 ounces in 24 hours, take one Imodium pill in the morning and one at night.
 - Also take a fiber supplement such as Metamucil. The dose is one teaspoon dissolved in water, in the morning and again in the evening.
- If you urinate fewer than 3 times in 24 hours.
 - If you urinate fewer than 5 times in 24 hours, drink more liquid.
- If your urine becomes a darker yellow color or cloudy, or if it has a strong odor.

Your doctor _____

Phone _____

Do you have questions or concerns?

If you have a home health nurse, call them first.

Ostomy nurses

Monday through Friday 801-585-2766
Leave a message. We will return your call the next business day.

For urgent concerns

24 hours every day 801-581-2121
Ask for the general surgery doctor on call.

For more information about living with an ileostomy, watch this six-part video series:
healthcare.utah.edu/general-surgery/ileostomy