



Medicines and Dehydration

Information for patients

This leaflet is about what actions to take if you develop an illness that causes dehydration. These actions are called 'medicine sick day rules'.



WHAT IS DEHYDRATION?

Dehydration is the loss of fluid from your body.

WHAT CAN CAUSE DEHYDRATION?

These things can make you dehydrated:

- ❖ being sick (vomiting)
- ❖ diarrhoea
- ❖ fever (high temperature, sweats, shaking)

If you are sick once or have diarrhoea once, you are not likely to get dehydrated.

If you are sick or have diarrhoea 2 times or more, you could get dehydration. Follow the advice in this leaflet.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN?

If you take certain medicines when you are dehydrated, you could get a more serious illness.

The 'Medicine Sick Day Rules' card has a list of medicines on it. Stop taking these medicines while you have an illness that makes you dehydrated.

ACE inhibitors:

a medicine for high blood pressure and heart conditions.

If you are dehydrated, these medicines can stop your kidneys working properly.

Examples: names ending in 'pril' such as:

- ❖ lisinopril,
- ❖ perindopril,
- ❖ ramipril

ARBs:

a medicine for high blood pressure and heart conditions.

If you are dehydrated, these medicines can stop your kidneys working properly.

Examples: names ending in 'sartan' such as:

- ❖ losartan,
- ❖ candesartan,
- ❖ valsartan

Diuretics: sometimes called 'water pills' for excess fluid and high blood pressure.

These medicines can make dehydration more likely.

Examples:

- ❖ furosemide,
- ❖ bendroflumethiazide,
- ❖ indapamide,
- ❖ spironolactone

Metformin: a medicine for diabetes.

Dehydration makes it more likely that you will get a serious side effect called lactic acidosis.

NSAIDs: anti-inflammatory pain killers.

If you are dehydrated, these medicines can stop your kidneys working properly.

Examples:

- ❖ ibuprofen,
- ❖ naproxen,
- ❖ diclofenac

SGLT2 inhibitors

A medicine for diabetes, heart conditions and some kidney conditions.

If you are dehydrated, these medicines can stop your kidneys working properly.

Examples: names ending in “gliflozin” such as:

- ❖ dapagliflozin,
- ❖ canagliflozin,
- ❖ empagliflozin

GLP-1 agonists

A medicine for diabetes. It is sometimes used to help with weight loss.

If you are dehydrated, these medicines can stop your kidneys working properly.

Examples:

- ❖ semaglutide (also called Ozempic, Rybelsus, Wegovy),
- ❖ exenatide (Bydureon),
- ❖ liraglutide (Victoza),
- ❖ lixisenatide (Lyxumia),
- ❖ dulaglutide (Trulicity),
- ❖ tirzepatide (Mounjaro).

Your pharmacist, doctor or nurse can tick your medicines on the 'Medicine Sick Day Rules' card.

Other medicine you take can also make you more ill when you are dehydrated. Your health professional will speak to you about these. They will write them on your card.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you get a dehydrating illness:

- ❖ stop taking any medicine listed in this leaflet while you have the illness
- ❖ stop taking any other medicine that your health professional tells you to.

Start taking your medicine again once you have recovered from the illness. This is very important. Start taking it again once you are eating and drinking as normal. This usually takes 24 to 48 hours.

When you start your medicines again, just take them as normal. Do not take extra for the doses you have missed.

WHAT DOES THE CARD LOOK LIKE?

The card is credit-card sized and printed on both sides:



NEED A CARD?

Please contact your pharmacist, doctor or nurse.

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