Advice for People with Short Bowel Syndrome

The staff caring for you have asked you to follow this advice as you may have a condition called short bowel syndrome. This is when either you have had surgery to remove part of your bowel (see diagram 1) or it may not be working as it should and therefore cannot absorb enough fluid to keep you properly hydrated.

When large amounts of small bowel have been removed or the small bowel is not working normally you may not be able to maintain your hydration by drinking fluids alone. You may need to have fluids given via a vein, this is called intravenous fluid. High losses/output from the bowel or stoma increases the risk of dehydration due to water and salt losses. High output is anything more than 1500ml/day. You may also need to have nutrients and calories given via a vein if you cannot absorb enough nutrients from your bowel and you are losing weight. This is called parenteral nutrition. Your fluid and diet will be discussed with you and a guide noted in your personal plan.

Fluids

- Drink 1000ml (volume may be more) of a glucose/salt solution per day (e.g. Dioralyte (8 sachets in 1000ml) or St. Marks oral rehydration solution (see recipe below)
- Restrict other fluids to around 1000ml/day (see list below)*
- Drink between meals instead of with meals

**Note**: Check with your clinical team as to the correct volumes of fluid you need. On hot days or if fluid losses increase then you may need to increase the volume.

Recipe for St. Marks Solution

20g/six level 5ml spoonfuls glucose  
3.5g/one level 5ml spoonful salt  
2.5g/one heaped 2.5ml spoonful sodium bicarbonate

Dissolve in 1000ml water.  
Keep chilled in the fridge.  
Flavour with a **small** amount of squash or cordial.  
(You can get a 2.5ml/5ml measuring spoon from your pharmacist).

*From this list, do not drink in total more than 1000ml each day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sugary drinks e.g. lemonade, cola</th>
<th>High energy drinks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pure fruit juice</td>
<td>Milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea, Coffee</td>
<td>Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet drinks</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Diet

You will be asked to follow a low fibre diet, this helps to reduce stoma losses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avoid the following foods:</th>
<th>You may be able to try the following fibrous foods after discussion with your dietitian:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruit (including dried)</td>
<td>Salad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuts</td>
<td>Sweetcorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pips</td>
<td>Mushrooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pith</td>
<td>Peas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seeds</td>
<td>Onions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raw vegetables</td>
<td>Chilli</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vegetable skins</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Choose low fibre starchy carbohydrates:
White bread, rolls, chapattis, naan breads
Rice based cereals, corn flakes, frosted flakes, coco crispies
Potatoes without skins
White pasta, rice, semolina, tapioca
Dishes which contain maize, millet or cornmeal
These foods will help thicken your stoma output and give you energy.

Include some protein in your diet:
Meat, fish, eggs, cheese
Check with your dietitian which protein foods are suitable for you.

It is important you discuss the above with your nutrition team/dietitian to make sure you have a balanced diet.

Medication

The following medications are prescribed to help to reduce stoma output:
Loperamide – take this at least 30 minutes before food
Codeine phosphate
Lansoprazole/omeprazole

You may need additional medications or supplements including:
Magnesium
Calcium/Vitamin D
Iron
Vitamin B12 injections (hydroxocobalamin)
Multivitamin
Your pharmacist/clinical team will advise on the dose and frequency of these medications.
Diagram 1. The diagram below shows the gastrointestinal system.

Personal plan

Foods allowed:

Foods to avoid:

Fluid allowance:
For further information

Contact details

Lisa Gemmell and Barbara Davidson, Senior Dietitians, 0191 223 1231
Email: lisa.gemmell@nuth.nhs.uk, barbara.davidson@nuth.nhs.uk

Hayley Leyland and Hannah Cook, Nutrition Nurse Specialists, 0191 213 9033 or 0191 213 9107
Email: hayley.leyland@nuth.nhs.uk, hannah.cook@nuth.nhs.uk

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) can offer on-the-spot advice and information about the NHS. You can contact them on freephone 0800 032 02 02 or e-mail northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk

Useful websites

If you would like further information about health conditions and treatment options, you may wish to have a look at the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk. On this website there is an information prescription generator www.nhs.uk/ips which brings together a wealth of approved patient information from the NHS and charity partners which you may find helpful.

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