

Client Name _____ Date _____

RD/DTR _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Preventing Dehydration in Your Baby

Breast milk and formula contain fluid. This fluid is very important for babies, especially when they are sick. When babies have a fever, are vomiting, or have diarrhea, they may lose more fluid than they can drink. They can't tell us that they are thirsty. But they still must get enough fluid from breast milk or formula to prevent dehydration.



How Much Fluid Does My Baby Need?

Most babies need about 1½ to 2 ounces of breast milk or formula each day for every pound of body weight. **Babies need to eat more than this to grow!**

Babies need to take **at least** this much to prevent dehydration:

- If your baby weighs 4 pounds, he or she needs at least 6 to 8 ounces of fluid each day.
- If your baby weighs 6 pounds, he or she needs at least 9 to 12 ounces of fluid each day.
- If your baby weighs 10 pounds, he or she needs at least 15 to 20 ounces of fluid each day.

When babies have a fever, are vomiting, or have diarrhea, they may need 2 to 3 ounces of fluid for every pound of body weight.

Signs of Dehydration

Babies are more likely to become dehydrated if they have a fever, are vomiting, or have diarrhea. Dehydration can be serious. If you are not sure your baby is getting enough fluid, watch for any of these signs and report them to your baby's doctor right away:

- Decreased amount of urine (fewer wet diapers)
- Dry lips
- Dry skin
- Sunken eyes, dark circles around eyes
- Soft spot on head may feel or appear sunken
- Increased sleepiness or irritability
- Weight loss

Good Sources of Fluid

Breast milk and infant formula are the best sources of fluid for young babies, even when they are sick. Unsweetened fruit juices and water are good sources of fluid for older babies. Sometimes, a special drink may be recommended to provide not only fluid but also to replace body salts that may be lost when vomiting or diarrhea is severe. These special drinks are called **electrolyte solutions**. Examples of these are Pedialyte and Lytren. Your baby's doctor will recommend the kind and amount your baby needs.

Sweet drinks are never recommended because they actually increase your baby's need for fluid.

Notes: