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# Discharge Instructions for Hypernatremia

You have been diagnosed with hypernatremia. This means you have too much sodium (salt) in your blood. It can be caused by eating too much salt. But it's more often due to fluid loss. Loss of too much fluid can occur if the kidneys excrete too much urine. Fluid loss can also be caused by extreme sweating. This can happen during hot weather or exercise. It can be caused by diarrhea or vomiting. It can also be caused if you don't drink enough water. If not treated right away, it can cause a seizure or a loss of consciousness. It can also lead to death.

Symptoms include:

- Extreme thirst
- Fatigue
- Confusion
- Low blood pressure

## Diet changes

Limit all foods that are high in sodium, including:

- Canned soups
- Canned beans
- Frozen dinners
- Commercially prepared tomato sauce and spaghetti sauce
- Pizza
- Potato and corn chips
- Salted pretzels and crackers
- Olives
- Pickles
- Sauerkraut
- Soy sauce
- Cottage, American, or feta cheeses
- Canned chili and stew
- Lunch meats
- Processed meats, such as hot dogs and salami
- Instant hot cereal

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- Quick breads made with baking soda or baking powder, including pancakes, biscuits, and waffles
  - Packaged dessert mixes

## **Other home care**

- Drink more fluids as advised.
- Have your sodium levels checked as often as advised by your provider. This is very important if you are taking a diuretic. This is a medicine that helps flush water from the body.
- Replace your body fluids after vomiting or diarrhea. Ask your provider for the best way to do this.
- Tell your provider about all medicines and dietary supplements you take. These include both prescribed and over-the-counter medicines. Some of these can raise sodium levels.
- Take all medicine as directed.

## **Follow-up care**

Follow up with your healthcare provider, or as advised. They will need to watch your condition closely. You may need extra care if you have a condition that causes your hyponatremia.

## **When to call your healthcare provider**

Call your provider right away if any of these occur:

- Muscle twitching, spasms, or cramps
- Fatigue
- Confusion
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness or fainting
- Dizziness or lightheadedness