

**Dehydration**

**Diagnosis/Disease/Illness**

Si usted desea esta información en español,  
por favor pídasela a su enfermero o doctor.

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Dehydration

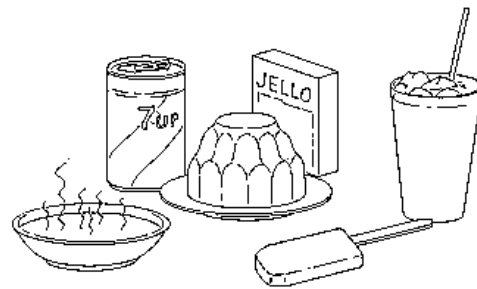
## What is Dehydration?

Dehydration is when a child does not have enough body fluid. This happens when the child loses more fluids than he or she takes in. Infants and children are more likely to have this problem than adults. Dehydration can be very serious.

A child who does not drink enough or loses too much fluid can become dehydrated. Hot weather can make a child need more fluid than usual. A child could also lose too much fluid by throwing up or by having too many loose stools (diarrhea).

A dehydrated child will have more than one of these signs:

- does not wet diapers as much as usual
- less active than normal
- fewer tears when crying
- cold skin
- mouth and tongue look dry;  
no spit in mouth
- very sleepy
- sunken soft spot on  
the head of infants
- quick weight loss
- very fussy
- fast breathing
- wrinkled skin
- pale, sick looking
- sunken eyes
- fever (101° F or more) for more than 24 hours



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## What to do:

If you think your child is dehydrated, call your doctor right away.  
Dehydration can be very serious in infants and children.

The treatment will depend on how sick your child is.

You may be asked to:

- give your child an electrolyte drink,  
like Pedialyte RS or Gatorade
- bring your child to the hospital for IV fluids
- treat the cause of the dehydration

## Now that you've read this:

- Tell your nurse or doctor some of the signs of dehydration in a child.  
(Check when done.)
- Tell your nurse or doctor what you would do if you thought your child was dehydrated. (Check when done.)



If you have any questions or concerns,

- call your child's doctor or  call \_\_\_\_\_

If you want to know more about child health and illness,  
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital:  
1919 East Thomas Road in Phoenix  
602-546-1400  
[www.phoenixchildrenshospital.com](http://www.phoenixchildrenshospital.com)

#### Disclaimer

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

#13 • Written by Fran London, MS, RN • Illustrated by Dennis Swain  
This handout is also available in Spanish as #357/13s.