

A significant loss of body fluid that impairs normal body functions.

Dehydration = loss of water only.

Isotonic dehydration (most common type) = loss of water and electrolytes

Cause(s):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hemorrhage • Vomiting • Diarrhea • Profuse diaphoresis • Burns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wounds • Long-term NPO status • Diuretic therapy • GI suction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperventilation • Unconsciousness • Diabetes insipidus • Fever • Difficulty swallowing
Signs/Symptoms:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thirst • Dry mucous membranes • Cool, clammy skin • Oliguria • Syncope • Headache • Confusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thready pulse • Tachycardia • Dizziness • Decreased skin turgor • Flattened neck veins • Anorexia • Hypotension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orthostatic hypotension • Sunken eyeballs • Tachypnea • Weakness • Vomiting • Dark urine • Weight loss
Diagnostic Tests:		
<p>Dehydration is determined by lab results and clinical findings.</p> <p>Expect elevated levels of hemoglobin, hematocrit, serum osmolarity, glucose, protein, blood urea nitrogen due to hemoconcentration (more water is lost than other substances)</p>		
Treatment(s):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key treatment for dehydration is fluid replacement. • Mild dehydration – client will increase oral intake of fluids <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Offer 2 to 4 ounces of fluids orally every hour • Severe dehydration – client will require IV fluid replacement • Drug therapy – required to eliminate the cause of dehydration such as an antiemetic for vomiting 		
Nursing Considerations:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older adults have increased risk for dehydration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Less total body water than young adults ○ Increased fluid excretion d/t diuretics, antihypertensives, and laxatives • Assess skin turgor on older adults by pinching skin on forehead or sternum • Older clients may limit how much they drink to avoid having to void frequently • Clients who exercise or work in hot and humid environments must be reminded to continually replace the fluid loss from sweating. • Babies may have sunken eyes or sunken fontanel and may not have wet diaper for more than 3 hours 		

Fluid overload or overhydration is an excess of body fluid.

Hypervolemia (most common) = excess fluid in the extracellular fluid (ECF)

Cause(s):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive fluid replacement • High intake of dietary sodium • Renal failure (end stage) • Heart failure • Long-term corticosteroid therapy • Syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone (SIADH) • Water intoxication • Psychiatric disorders with polydipsia 		
Signs/Symptoms:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tachycardia • Bounding pulse • Elevated blood pressure • Distended neck and hand veins • Weight gain • Decreased pulse pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevated central venous pressure • Shallow respirations • Shortness of breath • Crackles • Pitting edema • Pale skin • Cool skin • Headache 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Altered mental status • Visual disturbances • Skeletal muscle weakness • Paresthesia • Increased GI motility • Enlarged liver
Diagnostic Tests:		
<p>Overhydration is determined by lab results and clinical findings.</p> <p>Expect decreased levels of hemoglobin, hematocrit, serum protein levels due to hemodilution (more water in the vascular space)</p>		
Treatment(s):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition therapy – chronic fluid overload may require restriction of fluid and sodium intake • Drug therapy – diuretics may be used if the kidneys are functioning 		
Nursing Considerations:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor for signs/symptoms of worsening fluid overload to avoid pulmonary edema, heart failure or electrolyte dilution. • Pulmonary edema can occur quickly and may be fatal • Monitor client to ensure appropriate response to therapy. • Monitor client's skin for breakdown d/t excessive edema • Monitor I&O + weight • Report more than 3 lb gain in 1 week or 2 lb gain in 1 day. 		