

Gastroenterology

St. Mark's solution

Information for patients and carers

St. Mark's solution is a potassium-free glucose electrolyte mix commonly referred to as an oral rehydration solution (ORS). It is used for the management of short bowel syndrome caused by surgical removal or congenital disease of the small intestine. St Mark's solution may be recommended by your doctor or dietitian if you have a high stoma output.

Due to this complex condition you may not be able to absorb enough water, vitamins, minerals, protein, fat, calories and other nutrients from food whilst on a normal diet. If you are not absorbing enough fluid you may experience a high output from your stoma. If your output is high and you are losing more than 1500mL per day from your stoma, you are at a greater risk of becoming dehydrated.

To prevent dehydration you may be advised to drink 1 to 3 litres of ORS solution, sipped throughout the day.

How to make St. Mark's solution

You should drink _____ L of St. Mark's solution per day.

Ingredients for 1 litre batch	Amount	Note
Glucose powder	20g	6 teaspoons
Table salt (sodium chloride)	3.5g	1 level 5mL teaspoon
Sodium bicarbonate or sodium citrate	2.5g	Heaped 2.5mL teaspoon

All ingredients can be bought from supermarkets or pharmacies for less than a single prescription charge.

- The ingredients need to be dissolved in 1 litre of cold tap water
 - The prescribed amount should be sipped throughout the day
 - The solution must be thrown away within 24 hours and a fresh solution should be prepared the following day
- . The solution may taste salty but can be improved by:
- being stored in the fridge before you drink it, so it is chilled
 - being frozen and taken as slush
 - being sipped through a straw
 - adding a small amount of squash, fruit juice or cordial. These adjustments are best added while making up the solution rather than adding to each glass, to ensure the salt content remains high

Managing your stoma output

Drinking too much ordinary fluid will increase your stoma output and make you dehydrated.

When it is hot, we sweat and lose salt and fluid from the body. In this situation people with a high stoma output are more likely to get dehydrated and you may find you need to drink more electrolyte mix to replace these losses. Speak to your doctor or dietitian for advice on increasing the amount of daily St. Mark's solution you are drinking.

You can reduce your output by:

- limiting the amount of ordinary fluids that you drink (for example fruit juice, squash, fizzy drinks, water, tea, coffee) to about 1 litre (about 6 cups per day)
- drinking a rehydration solution like St. Mark's solution electrolyte mix to help your body absorb fluid and salt
- increasing your salt intake
- reducing your fibre intake

If you need more information, please talk to your doctor, specialist nurse or pharmacist.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at **imperial.pals@nhs.net** The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:
Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street
London W2 1NY

Email: **ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net**
Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:
imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

We have a free wi-fi service for basic filtered browsing and a premium wi-fi service (requiring payment) at each of our five hospitals. Look for WiFiSPARK_FREE or WiFiSPARK_PREMIUM