

Electrolyte mix (E-mix)

Introduction

You have been given this leaflet because you have been prescribed E-mix. It will explain what E-mix is and how to use and store it. If you have any questions, or if you are unsure about anything, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice.

Please read this leaflet carefully before you start using E-mix. Keep it in a safe place as you may need to refer to it again.

How does E-mix work?

E-mix is an oral rehydration solution (ORS) which you drink, and contains Glucose, Sodium Bicarbonate and Sodium Chloride.

In a person with intestinal failure most of the fluid that is taken by mouth will not be absorbed and will be passed straight out of the body. As this happens you will feel increasingly thirsty because sodium (salt) has been flushed out and you will become dehydrated.

Sodium is readily absorbed by the intestine. Solutions such as E-mix contain a high sodium content, are so are readily absorbed from the intestine, allowing greater fluid absorption to occur. The glucose in the E-mix boosts the absorption of both salt and water, so helps to keep you hydrated.

You should avoid low sodium drinks such as plain water when you are thirsty, and instead substitute it for oral rehydration solutions such as E-mix.

How do I use E-mix?

The solution needs to be made up freshly every day. To do this you need to measure out the following powders:

20g (six level 5ml spoonfuls) of Glucose

2.5g (one heaped 2.5ml spoonful) of Sodium Bicarbonate

3.5g (one level 5ml spoonful) of Sodium Chloride (salt)

This then needs to be dissolved in one litre of cold tap water, and you would need to drink up to the required volume throughout the day. This provides 90mmol/L of sodium, which is the recommended ideal sodium concentration.

To minimise dehydration, all fluids should be avoided for 30 minutes before and after eating, as eating stimulates gastric fluid production and therefore increases fluid losses.

What are the side effects?

You may find that the solution tastes bitter due to the Sodium Bicarbonate. This can be minimised by storing the solution in the refrigerator and/or by adding a small amount of fruit juice or squash (lemon or lime squash masks the taste best), or by sipping it through a straw. If this continues to be a problem, the Sodium Bicarbonate can be replaced by the same quantity of Sodium Citrate, which can be prescribed by your GP.

How do I store the E-mix?

E-mix can be stored at room temperature or in the fridge, and must be discarded after 24 hours after mixing if not drunk.

Additional information

The information in this leaflet is not intended to replace your doctor's advice. If you require more information or have any questions, please contact the hospital Medicines Information department on 020 8869 2762 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm).

Medicines advice for patients

If you have any questions about the medicines which you have been prescribed from the Trust, call us on 020 8869 2762 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Or email us at: www.nwlh-tr.medinfo@nhs.net (patients and visitors/medicines advice for patients)

How can I get a further supply?

You can buy the powders from any pharmacy and some supermarkets. They are cheaper to buy than to get through a prescription if you pay prescription charges.

If you need to get E-mix prescribed, you can ask your GP to supply you with original packs (boxes) of the three powders (Glucose, Sodium Bicarbonate and Sodium Chloride). You will then be able to use these to measure out and make up the E-mix according to the How do I use E-mix above.

General Trust Information

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS is a confidential service for people who would like information, help or advice about the services provided by any of our hospitals. Please call 0800 783 4372 between 10am and 4pm or e-mail Nwlh-tr.PALS@nhs.net. Please note that this service does not provide clinical advice so please contact the relevant department directly to discuss any concerns or queries about your upcoming test, examination or operation.

For a translation of this leaflet or for an English version in large print, audio or Braille please ask a member of staff or call 0800 783 4372.