

Patient Information for St Mark's Solution and UHB Solution

Why do I need to drink St Mark's or UHB solution?

Some children need to drink a salty, sugary glucose solution generally known as rehydration solution. Recently there has been a shortage of Dioralyte, a rehydration solution which is more commonly used. We are having difficulty getting hold of replacements for Dioralyte, and may use different products from time to time in hospital. You might be able to find some Dioralyte or similar things in supermarkets or pharmacies, but they could be scarce up to Christmas 2022 or a bit longer.

St Mark's or UHB solutions are being used as rehydration solution for children with vomiting or diarrhoea or children with a stoma or fistula. The salts in the solution turn into electrolytes which are naturally found in the body and are essential for good health. St Mark's or UHB solution should help your child feel less thirsty and less dehydrated.

Recipes for the solutions

St Mark's and UHB solution are equally effective but taste different. Your child might have UHB solution at the Children's Hospital and want to continue with it instead of St Mark's solution, but the ingredients for St Mark's solution can be easier to get hold of. To use one of these solutions at home you will need to make it up from powder ingredients using a recipe as below.

St Mark's Solution:

Glucose powder 20g (or table sugar)	Six level 5ml spoonfuls
Sodium Chloride 3.5g (table salt)	One level 5ml spoonful
Sodium bicarbonate Powder 2.5g (or baking soda)	One heaped 2.5ml Spoonful.

UHB Solution:

Glucose powder 20g (or table sugar)	Six level 5ml spoonfuls
Sodium Chloride 3.5g (table salt)	One level 5ml spoonful
Sodium Citrate powder 2.5g	One heaped 2.5ml spoonful.



Double ended medicine spoons usually have a 5ml end and a 2.5ml end.

How to make up St Mark's/ UHB solutions

- Measure the required amounts of powder and mix in **one litre of water** (1L) until all powder is dissolved.
- Make a fresh jug of the solution every day. You can keep this at room temperature or in the fridge.

Tips to improve the taste

- Add a **small amount** (less than 50ml) of **squash/cordial concentrate** to the jug after mixing with water.
- Store in the fridge or freeze and drink as a slush (the taste is weaker when cold).
- Sip through a straw.

Obtaining supplies

Ask your GP to provide a prescription for the individual ingredients of your preferred solution detailed below which will provide approximately 3 months' supply:

St Marks' Solution:

Sodium Bicarbonate BP (powder) 200g, Sodium Chloride BP 500g, Glucose Powder 450gx4.

UHB solution:

Sodium Citrate BP 200g, Sodium Chloride BP 500g, Glucose Powder 450gx4.

You may need to allow some time for the pharmacy to order these products in for you. There have been some problems recently getting hold of some of these powders due to high demand.

Alternatively you can use **home ingredients** including table sugar and baking soda or can buy the ingredients from your **local pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop**.

- Glucose powder with Vitamin C is an acceptable alternative to glucose powder if you are finding this difficult to source
- Sodium Chloride is ordinary table salt. Do not use low sodium alternatives such as Lo-Salt.
- Sodium bicarbonate is also called Bicarbonate of soda

Other products you can buy

There is a food supplement called O.R.S. **hydration** tablets you can buy over the internet [O.R.S. Hydration Tablets - Tubes of 24 – O.R.S Hydration \(orshydration.com\)](https://www.orshydration.com).

Two tablets can be mixed with 200ml of water to give a solution very similar to Dioralyte. **Please note** some another children's hospital found that children with stomas had an increased output from their stoma, particularly from the blackcurrent or strawberry flavours. The lemon flavour caused less issues but could still be a problem. Please avoid this product if your child has troublesome stoma output.

Contact details

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Adapted from adult patient information BNSSG leaflet available at:

<https://remedy.bnssgccg.nhs.uk/media/5165/oral-electrolyte-sol-patient-leaflet-revisionv4.pdf>. And the paediatric leaflet of Alder Hey hospital. With thanks to Lucy Hutchison and Helen Doble.