

Trial of Fluids

What is a trial of fluids?

An oral trial of fluids is commenced by clinicians for children with gastroenteritis who are suffering from mild to moderate clinical dehydration.

How much to offer and how frequently?

It is recommended that small amounts of oral rehydration are offered. The recommended amount is 0.5 mL/kg every 5 mins. For example, if you have a 20 kg child you would ask the care giver to offer 10 mL every 5 mins via either a syringe or a cup.

What to offer?

Oral rehydration solutions are recommended. Oral rehydration solutions contain the correct balance of glucose and sodium. Discuss with the treating medical officer what oral rehydration solutions are used in your hospital.

What fluids should be avoided?

Soft drinks and cordials are preferably not used as a rehydration fluid, as they have minimal sodium content.

How can carers keep track of how much their child has taken?

Your hospital may have a dedicated paediatric trial of fluids form, if so give this to parents to help them keep track. If not you can access the [Children's Health Queensland: Trial of Fluids](#) Form via QHEPS.

Tips in children

- Discuss with the treating doctor if antiemetics are appropriate before starting a trial of fluids
- Due to physiological differences, children are at a greater risk of hypoglycaemia. Consider the need to check/monitor the blood glucose level.
- If refusing Oral rehydration solution, discuss with treating doctor. Dilute apple juice (although not an electrolyte replacement) can be offered.

For further information:

[Queensland Paediatric Guideline: Gastroenteritis - Emergency management in children](#)

References:

This Queensland Paediatric Emergency Nursing Skill Sheet was developed by the Emergency Care of Children working group (funded by the Queensland Emergency Department Strategic Advisory Panel) with the help of the following resources:

Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service. (2018a, April 3). Intravenous Fluid guidelines - Paediatric and Neonatal. https://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0025/705670/gdl-01025.pdf

Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service. (2019, September 26). Gastroenteritis - Emergency management in children. <https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/guideline-gastroenteritis-emergency-management-in-children/>

Queensland Health State wide ED Nurse Educator Committee, Pearson, N., Cole, T., & Carney, S. (Eds.). (2016). Unit 8 Renal, Fluids and Electrolytes. In Queensland Health: Transition Support Program - Emergency. Module 3 - Paediatric Care in the Emergency Department (4th ed., pp. 143-145). State of Queensland (Queensland Health).



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- Supporting consumer rights and informed decision making in partnership with healthcare practitioners including the right to decline intervention or ongoing management.

- Advising consumers of their choices in an environment that is culturally appropriate and which enables comfortable and confidential discussion. This includes the use of interpreter services where necessary.
- Ensuring informed consent is obtained prior to delivering care.
- Meeting all legislative requirements and professional standards.
- Applying standard precautions, and additional precautions as necessary, when delivering care.
- Documenting all care in accordance with mandatory and local requirements.

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