

Salt For Infants with CF

People with CF lose large amounts of salt in their sweat. Infants with CF are even more prone to these salt losses due to rapid rates of growth, large body surface area and low salt content of breastmilk, infant formula and first foods. Some parents even report that their baby's skin tastes salty when they kiss them, or they may have salt crystals on their skin when it's hot. Salt losses are even higher in hot weather and if your baby has a fever because of increased sweating.

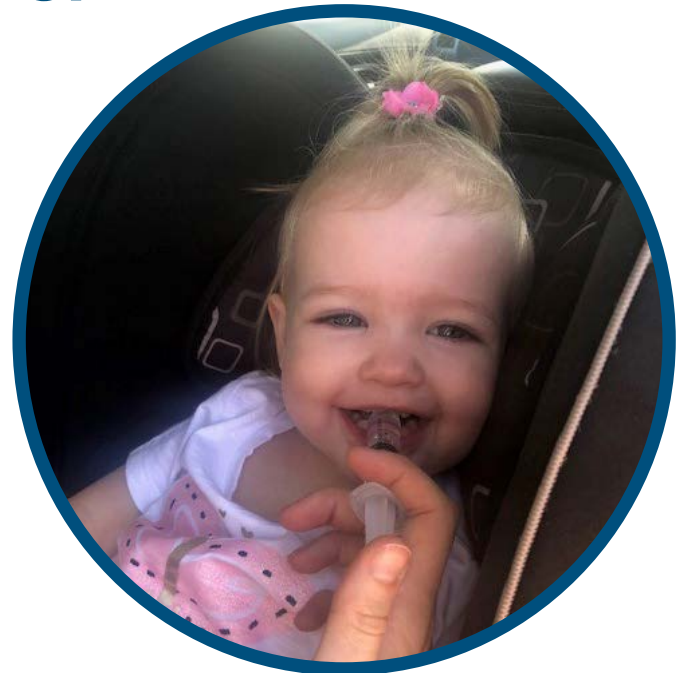
Loss of salt can increase the risk of dehydration which can be serious, especially in babies and young children. To prevent dehydration, the salt lost through sweat needs to be replaced and so salt supplementation is required, usually from birth.

Salt Dosages

Each baby will have individual salt requirements based on factors such as CF symptoms, weight, and the climate you are living in. The PCH dietitian will calculate your baby's salt requirements and adjust the dose over time based on those factors. In WA, salt supplementation is usually required all year round.

Signs that your baby may need more salt include:

- Concentrated or strong-smelling urine
- Salt crystals on the skin/hair line
- Lethargy
- Irritability



Administering Salt

A salt solution is recommended for infants and is available on prescription. It is a liquid which can be added to expressed breast milk or formula or can be mixed with a small amount of water and syringed straight into their mouth.

It is recommended to spread the required dosage out over the day by administering a small amount at each feed. Salt is best given at the beginning of a feed as it may cause vomiting in some infants. As they get older, salt will need to be added to their food as well.

Signs of Dehydration

If your baby is showing signs of dehydration, try giving them smaller amounts of milk feeds more frequently. You should also ring the CF clinic for further assessment and advice.

Signs of dehydration include:

- Fewer/lighter wet nappies than usual
- Salt crystals on the skin
- More concentrated/darker urine in nappies
- Dry skin and lips
- Dark sunken eyes
- Tearless crying
- Lethargy and drowsiness
- Loss of appetite

Thank you to Tanya Coelho, CF Dietitian,
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