



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Drinking fluids when you are in early labour at home

Maternity



Patient information

## **What should I drink when I am in early labour at home?**

Drink your usual amount of water and soft drinks when you are thirsty.

## **Do I need to drink extra fluids?**

No, you do not need to drink more than is usual for you.

## **How does being in labour make it difficult to manage your fluid input and output (how much fluid you drink and how much you wee out)?**

Hormones that your body makes when you are in labour can cause your fluid input and output to change.

## **Can I tell from the colour of my wee if I'm drinking the right amount?**

Yes. If your wee (urine) is pale yellow or light amber this is usually a sign that you are drinking the right amount.

## **What might happen if I drink more than I need or more than I wee out?**

If you drink more than you need or more than you wee out, your blood can become watered-down (diluted). The levels of some chemicals called salts, including sodium, in your blood can become too low. This is called hyponatraemia.

## Be aware

Having hyponatraemia may cause harm to you or your baby's health.

## How can I avoid hyponatraemia?

### Do:

- be aware of how much you are drinking and passing urine (going for a wee)
- drink a usual amount when you are thirsty.

## What should I do if I have drunk a normal amount and I have not been able to wee or my wee (urine) is dark in colour?

Do contact Maternity Triage on [01903 285269](tel:01903285269).

## Should I keep a record of how much I am drinking and how often I am going for a wee (passing urine) when I'm in early labour?

Yes. Do keep a record of how much you are drinking and how often you are going for a wee. Show this to your Midwife.

## Be aware

It is important not to drink too much or too little.

If you are worried or not sure what is right for you, do contact Maternity Triage [01903 285269](tel:01903285269).

Ref. number: 2323  
Publication date: 01/2024  
Review date: 01/2027

© University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust Disclaimer:  
The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way  
intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

