

Dehydration

What is dehydration?

Dehydration happens when your body loses more fluids than it takes in. If it is not treated, it can become serious.

Symptoms

- Feeling thirsty
- Headache
- Feeling dizzy or faint
- Dark yellow urine
- Dry lips and tongue

Causes

- Have been ill with vomiting or diarrhoea
- Have spent too long in the sun
- Sweat heavily
- Have a high temperature
- Are diabetic

The NHS recommends that you call 999 if you or somebody else has signs of dehydration and:

- blue, grey, pale or blotchy skin, lips or tongue – on brown or black skin, this may be easier to see on the palms of the hands or soles of the feet
- skin that feels cold
- difficulty breathing, or is taking lots of quick breaths
- are confused
- are sleepier than normal or difficult to wake

These could be signs of shock, which is a serious complication of dehydration.

Please note – The content on this website is provided for general information only, and should not be treated as a substitute for the medical advice of your own doctor or any other health care professional. If you are feeling unwell, make an appointment to see your GP or contact [**NHS 111**](#).

In an emergency, [**dial 999**](#).

Last updated: July 31, 2026

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