



SANTA MARIA MEDICINE

FLUID AND SALT INTAKE NEEDS

Fluids: Patients are encouraged to drink at least two liters of fluid daily. This is not limited to water, as patients require a high sodium intake. Suggested fluids include low-calorie sports drinks and water with electrolytes.

Alcohol: Patients should not drink alcohol as this can be dehydrating and also exacerbate many of dysautonomia's already confounding symptoms.

Salt Intake: According to Dinet.org, "While normal subjects reduce urinary sodium excretion on assumption of upright posture, patients with orthostatic intolerance do so ineffectively (Vanderbilt University Autonomic Dysfunction Center, 1999). Impaired renal sodium conservation can contribute to hypovolemia (Streeten, 1999). One study found POTS patients to have inappropriately low levels of renin and aldosterone, two hormones that promote sodium retention and increase plasma volume (Raj, Biaggioni, Yamhure, Black, Paranjape, Byrne & Robertson, 2005). Renin and aldosterone are both regulated by the kidney.



Increasing salt is an effective way to raise blood pressure in many patients with orthostatic hypotension. Salt helps to expand blood volume. A number of patients find salt tablets and/or electrolyte solutions to be helpful. Some physicians suggest patients who benefit from salt take in 10-15 grams daily (Low, 2000). Other physicians suggest between 3-5 grams of salt per day (Grubb et. al., 2006). Salt is 39% sodium, therefore 15 grams of salt equals 5,850 mg of sodium."

WHAT IS POTS?

Postural - Dependent on posture.

Orthostatic- Referring to the upright or vertical.

Tachycardia- Accelerated heart rate (fast heartbeat.)
Syndrome.

Other symptoms can include

Lightheadedness	Disorientation
Exercise intolerance	Joint/Muscle Pain
Chest pain	Headaches/Migraines
Syncope	Blood pooling

POTS is an acronym which refers to a syndrome characterized by an increase in heart rate by 20-30 beats per minute or more when the person stands up. This fast heart rate is abnormal and can lead to dizziness, weakness or even fainting.

The normal person will respond to standing up with NO noticeable change in heart rate. The heart and blood vessel system has an automatic compensation system which seems to fail for some unknown reason in the person who develops POTS.

The increase in heart rate can be associated with a drop in blood pressure, no change in blood pressure or an increase in blood pressure, depending on the patient.