

# REPLACEMENT OF GASTRIC LOSSES

## Indications

- Significant gastric losses (varies from patient to patient) that may affect electrolyte balance (eg gastroschisis)

## Key points

- Gastric replacement is done 1:1, unless otherwise specified by prescribing team
- Volumes are replaced in 4 hours increments (eg volume in mucous trap at 8h00 should be replaced over 8h00-12h00)
- Volume in mucous trap at midnight will be replaced on the following day so should be written on the next day's flowsheet. At 24h00, nothing should appear to be replaced

## Materials

- Solution as prescribed by medical team (often D5W ½ NS with 20 mEq KCL)
- IV tubing

## Procedure

1. Measure volume in mucous traps q 4 h (ideally 0h00-4h00-8h00-12h00-16h00-20h00)
2. Take volume in mucous trap and divide by 4 to get the rate at which you will infuse your replacement solution over the next 4 hours
3. In the To Be Replaced (TBR) column on your flowsheet (see example of flowsheet), write the total amount of volume that needs to be replaced over 4 hours.
4. In the Volume (Vol) column, write the levels read off the pump q 1 h. After 4 hours, your TBR and Vol columns should be the same or very close.
5. After 4 hours, take the new volume in your mucous trap and add to your TBR column (eg if volume at 0h00 was 10 ml and at 04h00, you have an extra volume of 14 ml, your new TBR is 24 ml).
6. Subtract the last volume in your Vol column from your new TBR ( $24 - 10.1 = 13.9$ ) and use this number to calculate your rate ( $13.9 \div 4 = 3.5$  ml/h)
7. Continue this process q 4 h. At 24h00 your TBR and Vol columns should be the same, indicating you have replaced all gastric losses 1:1

## Special considerations

- **At times**, the medical team may ask you to replace losses **only if volumes exceed a certain amount**. In those cases, if volume in mucous trap does not exceed prescribed volume, you must still document in the "Output" section of your flowsheet. You will not, however, replace the lost volume. In the "Parenteral Nutrition" section of your flowsheet, you will write "OFF" under the rate of your replacement solution. If gastric losses do go over the prescribed volume, you will start replacement solution again to replace over 4 hours.
- When a minimum volume for replacement is prescribed, **be sure to ask if they want to replace the whole volume lost or just the amount that goes over prescribed amount**. Example: MD prescribes to replace gastric losses over 10 ml. At 16h00, your losses are 15 ml. Do you replace the full 15 ml or just 5 ml ( $15 - 10 = 5$ )?

## Documentation

- See "flow sheet example" on Weebly, next to this quick reference.