Low Blood Sodium (Hyponatremia)

Sodium is a chemical in your blood that helps regulate fluid in your system. Low blood sodium means you have less than the normal amount of sodium in your blood. This causes too much water to stay in the blood. If the sodium level is down only slightly, you may not notice any symptoms. As it continues to go down you may notice certain symptoms. Your doctor can order a urine or blood test to check your sodium level.

What are the symptoms of low blood sodium?
You and your family should know what signs to look for. Tell your doctor or nurse if you have any of these symptoms.

Early on:
- Nausea and vomiting
- loss of appetite
- abdominal cramping
- headache
- feel very tired

Later:
- confusion
- feel very tired or weak
- twitching
- weight gain
- seizures

How is low blood sodium treated?
Treatment is aimed at resolving the condition that is causing it. Depending on the cause, you may need to cut back on fluids. In other cases, IV fluids and medications are needed. Your doctor or nurse will let you know how much you are allowed to drink. As your sodium level returns to normal, you may be able to drink a more normal amount of fluid. Blood or urine samples will be tested to check your sodium level.

Remember to:
- Drink only the amount of fluid you doctor has said to drink.
- Keep appointments with your doctor.

Call your doctor or nurse if any of the symptoms occur or get worse, or if you have any questions or concerns.