

## 8

## Diuretics

Patient name: \_\_\_\_\_ Admission: \_\_\_\_\_

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**I. The client/caregiver can define indications for the use of diuretics.**

- A. Diuretics increase the volume of urine production and excretion.
- B. Along with antihypertensive medications, they are used in the treatment of hypertension and heart failure and sometimes with kidney disease.
- C. Because this type of medication affects electrolytes, it is important to maintain electrolyte balance.

**II. The client/caregiver can list concerns and needed actions/considerations when taking diuretics.**

- A. Client will understand signs of dehydration or electrolyte imbalance.
  - Low potassium levels may be evidenced by generalized weakness and muscle cramps.
  - Dehydration may present as decreased urine output and thirst.
- B. Use a weight schedule to monitor for changes.
- C. Clients with kidney disease should be monitored more closely.
- D. A balanced diet and proper amounts of fluids are encouraged.
- E. Diuretics should be taken during the day, preferably in the morning.
- F. Ambulation ability or self-care issues should be addressed because of increased urinary output.

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- G. Have routine laboratory tests to evaluate electrolyte levels and liver and kidney function.
- H. Glucose and uric acids levels may increase with diuretic use. Clients with diabetes and/or gout should be monitored.
- I. Monitor blood pressure, and report any unusual changes.
- J. Avoid herbal or dietary supplements unless approved by physician.
- K. Discuss high-potassium diets (included teaching guide) or potassium supplements if prescribed by physician.
- L. Discuss low-sodium diets (included teaching guide) if prescribed by physician.
- M. If needed, instruct how to measure intake and output.
- N. Limit exposure to sunlight due to possible side effect of photosensitivity.
- O. Consult physician for instruction if experiencing an acute illness with fever, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- P. Restrict use of alcohol and caffeine.

**REFERENCES**

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- Deglin, J. H., & Vallerand, A. H. (2001). *Davis's drug guide for nurses*. Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Company.
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