Neurocardiogenic Syncope/ Vasovagal Syncope (Fainting)

Syncope, or fainting, is a brief loss of consciousness and not being able to stand up. **Neurocardiogenic** syncope is related to changes within the body’s nervous system, blood vessels, and heart. This is also referred to as **vasovagal syncope**, or the **common faint**. This type of fainting is **not** caused by any problem with the heart’s structure or rhythm. While not a severe problem, we know that this can cause problems with normal daily life. People who have fainting can also feel dizzy when standing.

**Actions Linked to Fainting**
- Prolonged standing, more so in a warm environment
- Changing from lying or sitting to standing
- Painful events
- Events that cause fear or anxiety
- Hair combing/grooming
- Urination

Before fainting, a person often will feel dizzy, nauseous, sweaty, and notice his vision getting dark. He will often look pale.

**Treatment**
The goal of treatment is to prevent repeat fainting.

**Fluid Therapy**
The most crucial part of treatment is to increase the body’s fluid volume.

1. We suggest that you drink ________ ounces of water and liquids without caffeine daily. Sport drinks that contain added salt (sodium) can also help the body to increase fluid volume. Limit juices and sport drinks to ¼ of your total fluids per day (____ Ounces).
2. During times of exercise, you will need to drink more fluid to make up for the loss of fluid.
3. You will need to limit the amount of caffeine in your diet as this causes your body to lose fluid and can dehydrate you.

An easy way to know whether you are drinking enough fluid is to look at the color of your urine. Your urine should be very pale in color to almost colorless. Dark, yellow urine may be a sign that you need to drink more fluid.

**Diet**
1. Eating regular meals will also help prevent symptoms and fainting spells.
2. Avoid low salt (sodium) diets.
3. Eat small amounts of pretzels or other salty snacks in between meals.

**Activities to Prevent Fainting Episodes**
1. Sit or lie down as soon as you begin to feel dizzy, notice your vision dimming or getting dark, or have a cold sweat.
2. Change positions slowly. Do not jump out of bed or stand up from sitting too quickly.
3. Regular exercise that uses the muscles in the legs such as walking, running, or squatting can improve symptoms.

Medicines
The recommendations above often work very well in treating this type of fainting. If you keep having fainting spells after you have followed the above recommendations, the use of certain medicines can help to control symptoms. If you have fainting episodes during exercise, you should be evaluated by a doctor.

Questions or Concerns
The doctor or nurse or our clinic staff can answer any questions.
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