

Table 6
Conditions and Factors That May Increase Risk for Dehydration or Fluid/Electrolyte Imbalance

Clinical Conditions

- Dementia or cognitive impairment
- Fever (including low-grade fever)
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Dependence on staff for eating and drinking
- Use of medications that can cause dehydration (e.g., diuretics, phenytoin, lithium, laxatives)
- Draining wounds or pressure ulcers
- Excessive sweating
- Rapid breathing
- Gastrointestinal bleeding
- Previous episodes of dehydration
- Difficult or painful swallowing
- Depression
- Small amount of dark or concentrated urine
- Excessive urination
- Nothing-by-mouth or fluid-restriction orders
- Chronic comorbidities (e.g. stroke, diabetes, congestive heart failure)
- Infection
- Dizziness

Environmental Factors

- Tube feeding
- Use of specialty beds
- Lack of social or family support
- Inadequate staffing
- Language barriers
- Isolation
- Restraints
- Facility-specific factors that may expose patients to excessive heat (e.g. malfunctioning air conditioners)