



## BASIC INFORMATION

### DESCRIPTION

A rare disorder of the hormone system, centered in the pituitary gland. It disrupts normal fluid regulation in the body. This condition has nothing to do with blood sugar levels or other types of diabetes. It can affect all ages and occurs equally in men and women.

### FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Excessive thirst that is difficult to satisfy.
- Passing large amounts of diluted, colorless urine (up to 15 quarts a day).
- Dry hands.
- Constipation.

### CAUSES

In one type (neurogenic or central), the pituitary gland in the brain does not make enough of an antidiuretic hormone (called ADH) needed for the body to function. In another type (nephrogenic), there is enough ADH hormone produced, but the kidneys don't work with the hormone as they should. Two other types involve an abnormal thirst (dipsogenic) and pregnancy (gestagenic). The cause for diabetes insipidus may be known or unknown.

### RISK INCREASES WITH

- Tumor of the pituitary gland or other brain tumor.
- Head injury, with damage to the pituitary gland.
- Brain infection, such as encephalitis or meningitis.
- Blockage of the arteries to the brain.
- Aneurysm or other blood vessel problems.
- Granulomas (chronic inflammation).
- Drugs, such as lithium.
- Kidney disorders.
- Family history of diabetes insipidus.

### PREVENTIVE MEASURES

No specific preventive measures.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The prognosis is generally good depending on the underlying disorder.

### POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Electrolyte imbalance, especially low levels of sodium or potassium. Either of these can cause heartbeat irregularity, fatigue, and congestive heart failure.
- Young children may have growth failure.



## DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

### GENERAL MEASURES

- Your health care provider will do a physical exam and ask questions about your symptoms. Medical studies may include water-deprivation tests to determine levels of ADH. Blood and urine studies are usually done. If diabetes insipidus is diagnosed, A CT or MRI of the brain may be done to check for any problems.
- Treatment involves controlling fluid balance and preventing dehydration and identifying the cause of the diabetes insipidus.
- Check weight daily and maintain a record.
- Wear a medical identification bracelet or neck pendant that indicates your medical problem and the drugs you take.
- To learn more: Diabetes Insipidus Foundation, 5203 New Prospect Dr., Ellicott City, MD 21043; (706) 323-7576 (not toll free); website: [www.diabetesinsipidus.org](http://www.diabetesinsipidus.org).

### MEDICATIONS

- Desmopressin (DDAVP) may be prescribed. It is a synthetic ADH and may be used in nose drops, by mouth, or in an injection form.
- Drugs may be prescribed to help the body balance salt and water.

### ACTIVITY

No limits.

### DIET

- Monitor fluid intake as advised by your health care provider.
- A low sodium diet may be prescribed.



## NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has symptoms of diabetes insipidus.
- Symptoms don't improve, despite treatment.
- New, unexplained symptoms develop. Drugs used in treatment may produce side effects.

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Special notes:

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More notes on the back of this page