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Chronic diarrhea (from acute gastroenteritis, cholera, etc...) limits ability of intestines to reabsorb salt & water, leading to risk of dehydration (life-threatening in children).

BUT diarrhea doesn't interfere with co-transport of Na+ & glucose in intestines. Water follows Na+ and glucose, by osmosis, across intestinal bloodstream. Patient gets hydrated.



PHYSIOLOGY IN HEALTH AND DISEASE

Acute gastroenteritis (inflammation of the stomach and intestines) is a common affliction of infants and children, causing about 200,000 hospitalizations per year in the United States. Worldwide, the resulting *diarrhea, mahutrition,* and *metabolic acidosis* (discussed in chapter 12) that results from different causes of gastroenteritis produce approximately 4 million deaths per year of children under the age of 4 years. Intravenous treatments are often not possible, especially in underdeveloped countries, and so oral rehydration therapy (ORT) was developed.

The diarrhea cannot be treated by simply drinking water, or even water with added salt, because the infections that cause diarrhea interfere with the ability of the intestine to absorb salt and water. However, these infections do not interfere with the membrane protein carrier that cotransports Na⁺ and glucose (see fig. 3.20). Glucose is required for this carrier to transport Na⁺ (and vice versa) from the intestinal lumen across the plasma membrane of epithelial cells. When Na⁺ enters an epithelial cell and then leaves the cell to enter the blood, water follows the Na⁺ by osmosis. This is because Na⁺ is the major extracellular solute, and increased extracellular Na⁺ exerts an osmotic pressure that draws water from the intestinal lumen.

The cotransport of sodium and glucose by the intestine was an accidental discovery. In the late 1940s medical personnel found that rehydration of patients improved when they added glucose (for nutrition) to a salt solution. If they added too much glucose, the diarrhea was made worse. This is because an excessive glucose concentration increases the osmolarity of the drink, and the higher osmotic pressure draws water into the intestinal lumen, causing an osmotic diarrhea. The molarity concentrations of glucose and Na⁺ in the solution should be about equal for effective cortansport, and thus effective rehydration—this is why sodas and juices (which have too high a glucose and too low a Na⁺ concentration) are not effective drinks for rehydration. The ORT recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) consists of 3.5 g sodium chloride; 2.5 g sodium bicarbonate (the bicarbonate helps counter metabolic acidosis); 1.5 g potassium chloride (the potassium counters the loss in blood potassium with prolonged diarrhea); and 20 g of glucose, all dissolved in a liter of water.

The lives of more than a million small children a year are saved by oral rehydration therapy. The effectiveness of ORT in treating the dehydration and other consequences of diarrhea is particularly impressive in the treatment of *cholera*. Without treatment, mortality from cholera is greater than 50%; with oral rehydration therapy, mortality is reduced to less than 10%.











Cell Transport - Review

"Permeability" of membranes

Passive transport = no energy, with concentration gradient ("downhill")

- Simple diffusion
- Facilitated diffusion
- Osmosis
- Filtration

Active transport = ATP required, against concentration gradient ("uphill")

- Primary active transport (calcium, hydrogen, & Na+/K+ pumps)
- Coupled transport (co-transport & counter-transport)
- Bulk transport

Cell membrane potential (MP)

- Resting potential
- Action potential