

Reply to correspondence letter ‘don't forget potassium!’ by K. Kaneko

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Dear Editor,

We thank Dr. Kaneko for his comments. While our audit [2] did not examine potassium levels in children receiving maintenance fluids and looked only at sodium levels, we would agree in general with Dr. Kaneko's comments [3]. The addition of potassium to maintenance fluids should certainly be considered in most children to avoid hypokalaemia. As Armon et al. [1] showed in their audit, a quarter of children were hypokalaemic and not receiving supplementary potassium in their maintenance fluid. However, in line with what is stated in NPSA alert 22 [4], we would encourage the checking of serum potassium levels prior to prescribing potassium in maintenance fluid to avoid hyperkalaemia and its consequences. We would also recommend checking serum electrolyte levels (including sodium and potassium) at least daily in children

receiving intravenous fluid, again reinforcing NPSA alert 22 [4].

References

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