

Robert Jones, MD, FASN  
The Kidneys and Water Retention  
**YOUR COMPANY HERE**

ROBERT JONES, MD, FASN: We define hyponatremia as a decrease in serum sodium concentration to a level below 136 mEq/L. Now, patients with serum sodium concentrations above 135 mEq/L are usually asymptomatic, and those with lower values, especially if they have been developed rapidly, can have a variable range of symptomatology.

Severe hyponatremia is defined as serum concentration below 115 mEq/L; although others use a high level for defining severe hyponatremia. By far the most common form of hyponatremia is hypotonic or dilutional hyponatremia. This is caused by water retention as a consequence of water intake exceeding the capacity of the kidneys to excrete water. As a consequence, water retention is established and as we have an excess of water on board in relation to existing sodium stores. We should keep in mind that hyponatremia is a