

# Diarrhea Management

## Assessment

### ASK

How long has the child had diarrhea?  
Is there blood in the stool?  
Is there vomiting?

### OBSERVE

1. General condition
2. Sunken eyes?
3. Ability/eagerness to drink
4. Sleepy or unconscious?
5. Severely malnourished?
6. Skin pinch goes back slowly or very slowly?

### ACT

1. **Urgently refer to the clinic if two or more of the following signs:**
  - Lethargic/unconscious
  - Sunken eyes
  - Not able to drink/drinks poorly
  - Skin pinch returns to normal very slowly
2. **Advise mother to:**
  - Continue and increase breast-feeding
  - Give sips of SSS on the way to the clinic
3. **Refer to the clinic when:**
  - Diarrhea persists for over 14 days
  - Blood in the stool
4. **With two or more of the following signs, refer to a clinic:**
  - Restless/irritable
  - Sunken eyes
  - Drinks eagerly/thirsty
  - Skin pinch returns to normal slowly

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## Home Treatment

When the child has diarrhea but no dehydration and/or when the child comes home from the clinic:

- Guide the mother in administering the home treatment (see box below)
- Monitor the child
- Instruct the mother to take the child back to the clinic if the child does not improve in 3 days

**Zinc Supplementation is now recommended for ALL children with diarrhea**

**Supplement:** Dispersible tablets – dissolve in water and may require gentle stirring or mild agitation.

**Administration:** Tablets can be chewed or dissolved in clean water, ORS, SSS, fruit juice or breastmilk.

**Dose:** 20 mg/day for children 6 months of age or older (1 tablet); 10 mg/day for infants less than 6 months of age (1/2 tablet)

**Duration:** 10 days - even if diarrhea has stopped.

### Advice for the Mother

1. Prevent dehydration by giving Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) or Sugar Salt Solution (recipe below) as often as the child will drink.  
[One "pinch" of salt and one "fistful" of sugar to ½ liter of clean water]
2. Increase frequency of breastfeeding or give milk feeds with twice the usual clean water
3. Continue to feed the child as normal. Give an additional small meal per day for several days.



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