

## How Can Diarrhoea Be Prevented?

Diarrhoea can be prevented by:

- keeping ourselves and our surroundings clean;
- eating properly, so the child grows well;
- using clean water.

## Keeping Clean

**BY KEEPING CLEAN,  
WE CAN PREVENT DIARRHOEA**

Dirt, rubbish, stools and urine contain germs which can cause diarrhoea. These germs can be carried by flies as well as on dirty hands. Keep these germs away from food and drinking water.

Wash your hands:

- after using the latrine;
- after cleaning children who have urinated or defaecated;
- before cooking or eating;
- before feeding children.

Remember to wash the children's hands too. The children can discuss why this is necessary.

Use a latrine. If there is none, make sure that the whole family passes stools far from the house and far from any water. Stools passed near the house should be taken away and buried.

**Remember! Small children's stools are more dangerous than adults' stools.**

## Healthy Food

Breastmilk is the best food for babies and helps to prevent infections, including diarrhoea. Breastfeed babies for as long as possible. Dirty feeding bottles cause diarrhoea.

When they are about four to six months old, all babies should begin to take other foods, as well as breastmilk. Soft mashed foods, like porridge and fruits, given frequently are best.

The food we eat should be fresh and prepared in a clean place, using clean pots and utensils. Cooked food should be eaten while hot. If it needs reheating, it should be well heated before it is eaten.

Keep flies away from food and always wash your hands carefully before handling and eating food. Wash food in clean water before cooking or eating it.

## Clean Water

Make sure water for drinking is clean. Take it from the cleanest possible source. Keep it in a clean, covered container, and use this water for drinking and cooking only.

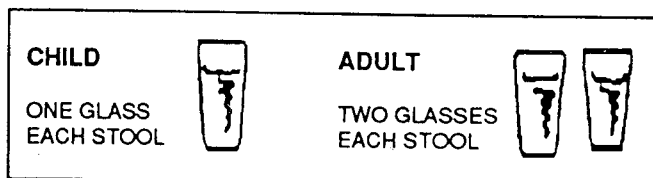
Keep the source of water clean. Keep animals away. People should not spit, throw rubbish or wash themselves or their clothes near the place where people get their drinking water. Never urinate or defaecate in or near water.

## Treating Diarrhoea

### 1. Plenty of Fluids

The most important thing is to be sure that the child drinks as much liquid as he loses, from the time the diarrhoea starts. Rehydration is putting back into the child's body the water that has been lost because of the diarrhoea and vomiting.

Giving lots of liquid to a child with diarrhoea may at first increase the amount of diarrhoea. This is all right. Most of the fluid will still be absorbed and the body is trying to get rid of the germs in the diarrhoea. A child with diarrhoea needs one cup/glass of liquid (small glass for a small child) each time he/she passes a loose stool.



### 2. Continue Feeding

Sometimes mothers stop giving food to a child who has diarrhoea. This is a mistake. The sick child needs food so that he has enough strength to fight the illness. Breastmilk is the safest and best food for babies. Encourage older children to take their usual food, several times each day. Be patient. Sick children need to be encouraged to eat.