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Made at Home
Packaged

Oral Rehydration Solutions: Made at Home

The **most effective, least expensive** way to manage diarrhoeal dehydration

The "Simple Solution" Do-It-Yourself Encouraging self-reliance

- [Recipe for home-made salt and sugar solution](#)
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[The Special Spoon for homemade Oral Rehydration Solutions \(ORS\) from TALC - Teaching-aids At Low Cost](#)

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Key Message 5.

A child with diarrhoea should receive oral rehydration salts (ORS) solution and a daily zinc supplement for 10–14 days. Diarrhoea medicines are generally ineffective and can be harmful.

Made at home: ORS Solution A special drink for diarrhoea

Give the child a drink made with 6 level teaspoons of sugar and 1/2 level teaspoon of salt dissolved in 1 litre of clean water. Be very careful to mix the correct amounts. Too much sugar can make the diarrhoea worse. Too much salt can be extremely harmful to the child. Making the mixture a little too diluted (with more than 1 litre of clean water) is not harmful.

Diarrhoea usually cures itself in three to four days with rehydration (drinking a lot of liquids). The real danger is the loss of liquid and nutrients from the child's body, which can cause dehydration and malnutrition.

A child with diarrhoea should never be given any tablets, antibiotics or other medicines unless prescribed by a trained health worker.

The best treatment for diarrhoea is to (1) drink lots of liquids and oral rehydration salts (ORS), properly mixed with clean water from a safe source, and (2) take zinc tablets or syrup for 10–14 days.

What is ORS?	ORS (oral rehydration salts) is a special combination of dry salts that is mixed with safe water. It can help replace the fluids lost due to diarrhoea.
When should ORS be used?	When a child has three or more loose stools in a day, begin to give ORS. In addition, for 10–14 days, give children over 6 months of age 20 milligrams of zinc per day (tablet or syrup); give children under 6 months of age 10 milligrams per day (tablet or syrup).
Where can ORS be obtained?	In most countries, ORS packets are available from health centres, pharmacies, markets and shops.
How is the ORS drink prepared?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put the contents of the ORS packet in a clean container. Check the packet for directions and add the correct amount of clean water. Too little water could make the diarrhoea worse. 2. Add water only. Do not add ORS to milk, soup, fruit juice or soft drinks. Do not add sugar. 3. Stir well, and feed it to the child from a clean cup. Do not use a bottle. <p>Encourage the child to drink as much as possible.</p>
How much ORS drink to give?	<p>A child under the age of 2 years needs at least 1/4 to 1/2 of a large (250-millilitre) cup of the ORS drink after each watery stool.</p> <p>A child aged 2 years or older needs at least 1/2 to 1 whole large (250-millilitre) cup of the ORS drink after each watery stool.</p> <p>Give the child a drink made with 6 level teaspoons of sugar and 1/2 level teaspoon of salt dissolved in 1 litre of clean water.</p>
What if ORS is not available?	<p>Be very careful to mix the correct amounts. Too much sugar can make the diarrhoea worse. Too much salt can be extremely harmful to the child.</p> <p>Making the mixture a little too diluted (with more than 1 litre of clean water) is not harmful.</p>

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» **Download and Print Instructions:** [Home made Oral Rehydration Salts \(ORS\) for treating dehydration caused by diarrhoea](#)

Oral Rehydration Solutions

To prevent too much liquid being lost from the child's body, an effective oral rehydration solution can be made using ingredients found in almost every household. One of these drinks should be given to the child every time a watery stool is passed.

Ideally these drinks (preferably those that have been boiled) should contain:

- starches and/or sugars as a source of glucose and energy,
- some sodium and
- preferably some potassium.

The following traditional remedies make highly effective oral rehydration solutions and are suitable drinks to prevent a child from losing too much liquid during diarrhoea:

- **Breastmilk**
- **Gruels** (diluted mixtures of cooked cereals and water)
- **Carrot Soup**
- **Rice water - Congee**

A very suitable and effective **simple solution** for rehydrating a child can also be made by using salt and sugar, if these ingredients are available.

If possible, add 1/2 cup **orange juice** or some mashed **banana** to improve the taste and provide some **potassium**.

Molasses and other forms of raw sugar can be used instead of white sugar, and these contain more potassium than white sugar.

If none of these drinks is available, other alternatives are:

- **Fresh fruit juice**
- **Weak tea**
- **Green coconut water**

If nothing else is available, give

- water from the cleanest possible source
(if possible brought to the boil and then cooled).

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Download Instruction Guides in English and Creole

Thanks to Charles R. Staubs, D.O. and Jean Michelet

- [ORS - An Efficient, Inexpensive, Clean Delivery System](#)
- [ORS - Treat your child's diarrhea at home](#)

The "Simple Solution" - Home made Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS) Recipe

Preparing 1 (one) Litre solution using Salt, Sugar and Water at Home Mix an oral rehydration solution using the following recipe.
Ingredients:

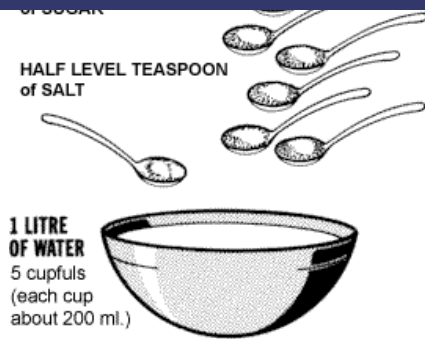
- **Six (6) level teaspoons of Sugar**
- **Half (1/2) level teaspoon of Salt**
- **One Litre of clean drinking or boiled water and then cooled** - 5 cupfuls (each cup about 200 ml.)

Preparation Method:

- Stir the mixture till the salt and sugar dissolve.



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Effective homemade remedy for watery diarrhea

An efficient and effective homemade remedy to be used when watery diarrhea strikes and is a good substitute for oral rehydration salts:

Ingredients:

- 1/2 to 1 cup precooked baby rice cereal or 1½ tablespoons of granulated sugar
- 2 cups of water
- 1/2 tsp. salt

Instructions:

Mix well the rice cereal (or sugar), water, and salt together until the mixture thickens but is not too thick to drink. Give the mixture often by spoon and offer the child as much as he or she will accept (every minute if the child will take it). Continue giving the mixture with the goal of replacing the fluid lost: one cup lost, give a cup. Even if the child is vomiting, the mixture can be offered in small amounts (2-1 tsp.) every few minutes or so.

- Banana or other non-sweetened mashed fruit can help provide potassium.
- Continue feeding children when they are sick and to continue breastfeeding if the child is being breastfed.

Questions on Solutions made at Home

Q. How do I measure the Salt and Sugar? Different countries and different communities use various methods for measuring the salt and sugar.

- Finger pinch and hand measuring, and the use of local teaspoons can be taught successfully.
- A plastic measuring spoon is available from Teaching Aids at Low Cost (TALC) with proportions to make up 200 ml of sugar/salt solution.

Whatever method is used, people need to be carefully instructed in how to mix and use the solutions. Do not use too much salt. If the solution has too much salt the child may refuse to drink it. Also, too much salt can, in extreme cases, cause convulsions. Too little salt does no harm but is less effective in preventing dehydration. A rough guide to the amount of salt is that the solution should **taste no saltier than tears**.

Q. How much solution do I feed? Feed after every loose motion. Adults and large children should drink at least 3 quarts or liters of ORS a day until they are well. **Each Feeding:**

- **For a child under the age of two**
Between a quarter and a half of a large cup
- **For older children**
Between a half and a whole large cup

For Severe Dehydration: Drink sips of the ORS (or give the ORS solution to the conscious dehydrated person) every 5 minutes until urination becomes normal. (It's normal to urinate four or five times a day.)

Q. How do I feed the solution?

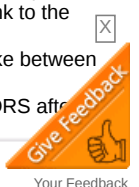
- **Give it slowly, preferably with a teaspoon.**
- **If the child vomits it, give it again.**

The drink should be given from a cup (feeding bottles are difficult to clean properly). Remember to feed sips of the liquid slowly.

Q. What if the child vomits? If the child vomits, wait for ten minutes and then begin again. Continue to try to feed the drink to the child slowly, small sips at a time. The body will retain some of the fluids and salts needed even though there is vomiting.

Q. For how long do I feed the liquids? Extra liquids should be given until the diarrhoea has stopped. This will usually take between three and five days.

Q. How do I store the ORS solution? Store the liquid in a cool place. Chilling the ORS may help. If the child still needs ORS after hours, make a fresh solution.





10 Things you should know about Rehydrating a Child.

1. Wash your hands with soap and water before preparing solution.
2. Prepare a solution, in a clean pot, by mixing - Six (6) level teaspoons of sugar and Half (1/2) level teaspoon of Salt
or
- 1 packet of Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS) 20.5 grams
- mix with**
- One litre of clean drinking or boiled water (after cooled) Stir the mixture till all the contents dissolve.
3. Wash your hands and the baby's hands with soap and water before feeding solution.
4. Give the sick child as much of the solution as it needs, in small amounts frequently.
5. Give child alternately other fluids - such as breast milk and juices.
6. Continue to give solids if child is four months or older.
7. If the child still needs ORS after 24 hours, make a fresh solution.
8. ORS does not stop diarrhoea. It prevents the body from drying up. The diarrhoea will stop by itself.
9. If child vomits, wait ten minutes and give it ORS again. Usually vomiting will stop.
10. If diarrhoea increases and /or vomiting persists, take child over to a health clinic.

Footnote: People often refer to home-prepared oral rehydration solutions as "home-brew." This should be discouraged because the word brew implies:

- either **fermenting** which in fact is an obstacle to some home-prepared solutions especially those made with rice-powder
- or it implies **boiling** (as in tea) which, especially with sugar and salt or using packets of ORS, should not be done because it decomposes the sugar, or caramelises.

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Diarrhoea can be prevented
by breast-feeding, by immunizing all children against measles, by using latrines,
by keeping food and water clean, and by washing hands before touching food

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