



09. Preparing oral rehydration solution (ORS)

Last update: 2023-03-31

Overview

Oral rehydration solution (ORS) is the first step in managing people suffering from diarrhoea and dehydration. ORS can be prepared:

- Either from packets of ORS or
- At home from traditional remedies, or water, sugar and salt.

What to do and how to do it

1. *How to prepare ORS with packets*

ORS packets can be obtained at your local National Society branch or at a health centre in the community. They come in the form of a powder which needs to be diluted before use.

- Wash hands with soap and clean water.
- Pour all the powder from one sachet of ORS into a clean container that will hold at least one litre of liquid.
- Follow the instructions on the packet to find out how much water is needed to dilute the contents of each packet. Pour the indicated amount of the safe water available into the container and mix it with the powder. Always use clean water to dilute ORS (see Action Tool *Clean, safe household water*).

2. *Instructions for home rehydration*

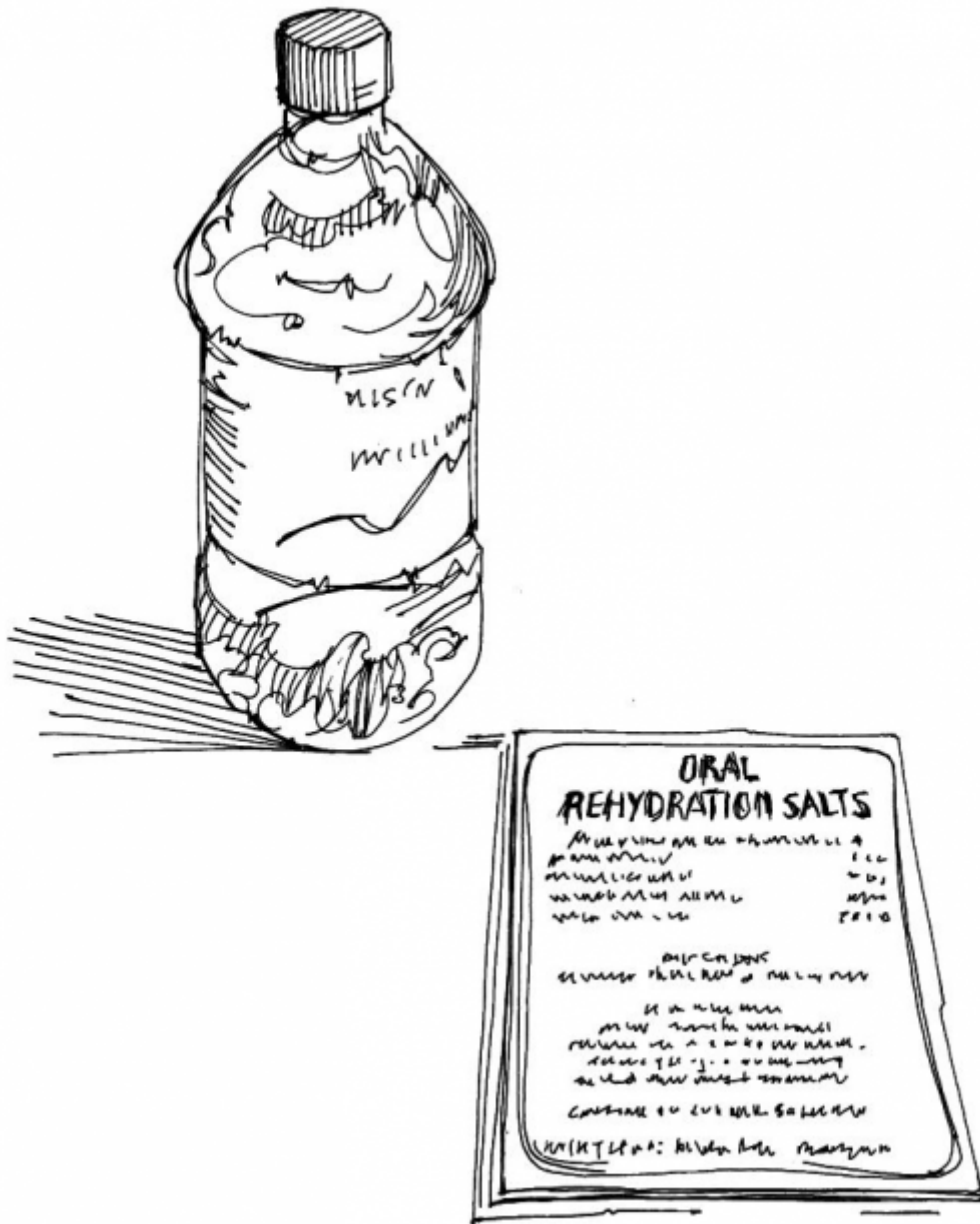
Some **traditional remedies** can be an effective ORS and can prevent a person from losing too much liquid through diarrhoea. Tell caregivers about effective traditional remedies if ORS packets are not available and a health facility is inaccessible.

- A very simple and effective solution for rehydration can be mixed from salt, sugar and water.
- Rice water can be used instead of regular water to prepare the ORS and carrot soup, fruit juice or a smashed banana can be added to change the taste. Carrot soup or fruit juice can also be added to ready made ORS sachets as children may not always like the taste otherwise.

Instructions for making **home-made sugar/salt solution**: ** should only be used when ORS packets are not available**

- Wash your hands with soap and water before preparing the solution.
- In a clean container mix:
 - One litre of safe water.
 - Half a small spoon of salt (3.5 gms).
 - Four big spoons (or eight small spoons) of sugar (40 gms).

- Stir the salt and the sugar until they dissolve in the water.



Community messages



01. Preparing and giving oral rehydration solution (ORS)