

## Transmission

- Contaminated food
- Unwashed hands
- Water contaminated with human waste (stools)

## Symptoms

- Three or more loose or liquid stools over a period of 24 hours.
- Possible stomach pains, fever, nausea and vomiting.
- Can cause dehydration, sepsis and death.

## Prevention

- Safe, clean water (including a clean, covered water container in the household).
- Use appropriate sanitation facilities (sound, clean latrine).
- Wash hands with soap (especially after using the toilet or cleaning a baby).
- Good food hygiene (thoroughly cooked food, covered food, clean utensils, etc.).
- Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life.
- Social mobilization and behaviour change communication.
- Routine vaccination for rotavirus.

## Vulnerable people

- Children under five, malnourished children.
- People living with HIV.
- Pregnant women.
- People living in areas that have poor water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and services.

## If an epidemic occurs

- Initiate community-based surveillance.
- Treat mild cases in the community by providing oral rehydration solution and zinc supplementation.
- Detect and refer serious cases to health facilities.
- Promote good food hygiene (well-cooked food, covered food, clean utensils etc.).
- Encourage breastfeeding and continued breastfeeding when the baby or child is sick.
- Promote safe, clean water (including a clean, covered water container in the household).
- Promote use of appropriate sanitation facilities (sound, clean latrines)
- Promote handwashing with soap (especially after using the toilet or cleaning a baby).
- Increase social mobilization and behaviour change communication.
- Promote recommended health practices.

- Identify the possible source.

# Community-based assessment - questions

Make a map of the community and mark the information you gather on the map. Record other details.

- When did people start to fall sick with diarrhoea?
- How many people have fallen sick with diarrhoea? Where?
- How many people have died from diarrhoea? Where?
- How many people live in the affected community or area? How many children under five years of age live in the area?
- Who and where are the vulnerable people?
- Are children in the affected community generally well nourished?
- Do people always have enough food?
- How common is breastfeeding?
- Where do people obtain their drinking water? Is the source safe? Do people treat their water?
- What sanitation facilities (including communal latrines) are available? Do people use them?
- What hand-washing facilities are available? Do they have soap?
- Where are the local health facilities and services? (Include traditional and community carers.)
- What are the community's habits, practices and beliefs about caring for and feeding sick people? Do women continue to breastfeed babies and infants when they are sick?
- Is a social mobilization or health promotion programme in place?
- What are the community's habits, practices and beliefs about hygiene, sanitation and water?
- Which sources or channels of information do people use most?
- Are rumours or is misinformation about diarrhoea spreading in the community?
- Can people identify the signs and symptoms of dehydration?
- Do people know how to make oral rehydration solution (ORS)? Do they have resources at hand to make it?
- Do people know how to treat water?



*Encourage exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life – including when a child is sick. A dehydrated child may experience the following: sunken eyes, dry mouth, lethargic/weak, skin pinch returns slowly, or little or no urine*

## Volunteer actions

See the following action tools for more information on what actions to take against acute diarrhoeal disease:

- 1 - Community-based surveillance
- 2 - Community mapping
- 3 - Communicating with the community
- 4 - Referral to health facilities
- 5 - Volunteer protection and safety
- 7 - Assessment of dehydration
- 9 - Preparing an oral rehydration solution (ORS)
- 10 - Giving oral rehydration solution (ORS)
- 11 - Zinc supplementation
- 12 - Managing fever
- 13 - Breastfeeding
- 14 - Infant and young child feeding in emergencies
- 15 - Measuring acute malnutrition in emergencies
- 16 - Measuring the height and weight of children
- 17 - Measuring mid upper arm circumference (MUAC)
- 18 - Measuring oedema (water retention) in children
- 19 - Psychosocial support (Psychological first aid (PFA))
- 29 - Hygiene promotion
- 30 - Clean, safe household water
- 31 - Good food hygiene

- 32 - Sanitation
- 33 - Building and maintaining latrines
- 34 - Handwashing with soap
- 39 - Preparing and using disinfectants
- 43 - Social mobilization and behaviour change