

example, is the child able to take fluid into his mouth and swallow it? If you are not sure about the mother's answer, ask her to offer the child a drink of clean water or breast milk. Look to see if the child is swallowing the water or breast milk. A child who is breastfed may have difficulty sucking when his nose is blocked. If the child's nose is blocked, clear it. If the child can breastfeed after his nose is cleared, the child does not have the danger sign.

Step 2: ASK : Does the child vomit everything?

A child who is not able to hold anything down at all has the sign "vomits everything." What goes down comes back up. A child who vomits everything will not be able to hold down food, fluids or oral drugs. A child who vomits several times but can hold down some fluids does not have this general danger sign.

Step 3: ASK: Has the child had convulsions?

Ask the mother questions on whether the child has suffered from convulsions (local term) or not.

Step 4: LOOK: See if the child is lethargic or unconscious.

The lethargic child is sleepy when the child should be awake. A child who stares blankly and does not appear to notice what is happening around is also lethargic.

The unconscious child does not waken at all. This child does not respond to touch, loud noise or pain.

Step 5: Ensure that the child is referred to a PHC/CHC immediately.



Remember:

- All sick children must be assessed for general danger signs.
- A child who has even one general danger sign has a severe problem. Refer this child urgently to hospital.
- Complete the rest of the assessment and any pre-referral treatment immediately so that referral is not delayed.

If child has diarrhoea, cough and/or cold, or fever, without any of the danger signs, the next three chapters describe how to proceed.