

- Ask the mother to offer the child some water in a cup or spoon. Watch the child drink. Is the child not able to drink or is drinking poorly? Is the drinking eagerly, thirsty?
- A child is *not able to drink* if he is not able to suck or swallow when offered a drink. A child may not be able to drink because he is lethargic or unconscious.
- A child is *drinking poorly* if the child is weak and cannot drink without help. He may be able to swallow only if fluid is put in his mouth.
- A child has the sign *drinking eagerly, thirsty* if it is clear that the child wants to drink. Look to see if the child reaches out for the cup or spoon when you offer him water. When the water is taken away, see if the child is unhappy because he wants to drink more.
- If the child takes a drink only with encouragement and does not want to drink more, he does not have the sign “drinking eagerly, thirsty.”
- PINCH the skin of the abdomen. Does it go back: Very slowly (longer than 2 seconds)? Slowly?

Step 3: How to Classify Diarrhoea

Signs/Symptoms	Status	Action to be taken
Two of the following signs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lethargic or unconscious • Sunken eyes • Not able to drink or drinking poorly • Skin pinch goes back very slowly. 	Severe Dehydration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer URGENTLY to hospital with mother giving frequent sips of ORS/ fluids on the way.
Two of the following signs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restless, irritable • Sunken eyes • Drinks eagerly, thirsty • Skin pinch goes back slowly. 	Some Dehydration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give fluid and food for some dehydration (Plan B). • Follow-up in 2 days if not improving.
Not enough signs to classify as some or severe dehydration. Passing urine normally.	No Dehydration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give fluid and food to treat diarrhoea at home (Plan A). • Follow-up in 2 days if not improving.
Diarrhoea for 14 days or more.	Severe Persistent Diarrhoea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to hospital.
Blood in the stool.	Dysentery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral if possible. • Or give Cotrimoxazole for 5 days. (see Annexure 6 for dosage) • Follow-up in 2 days.