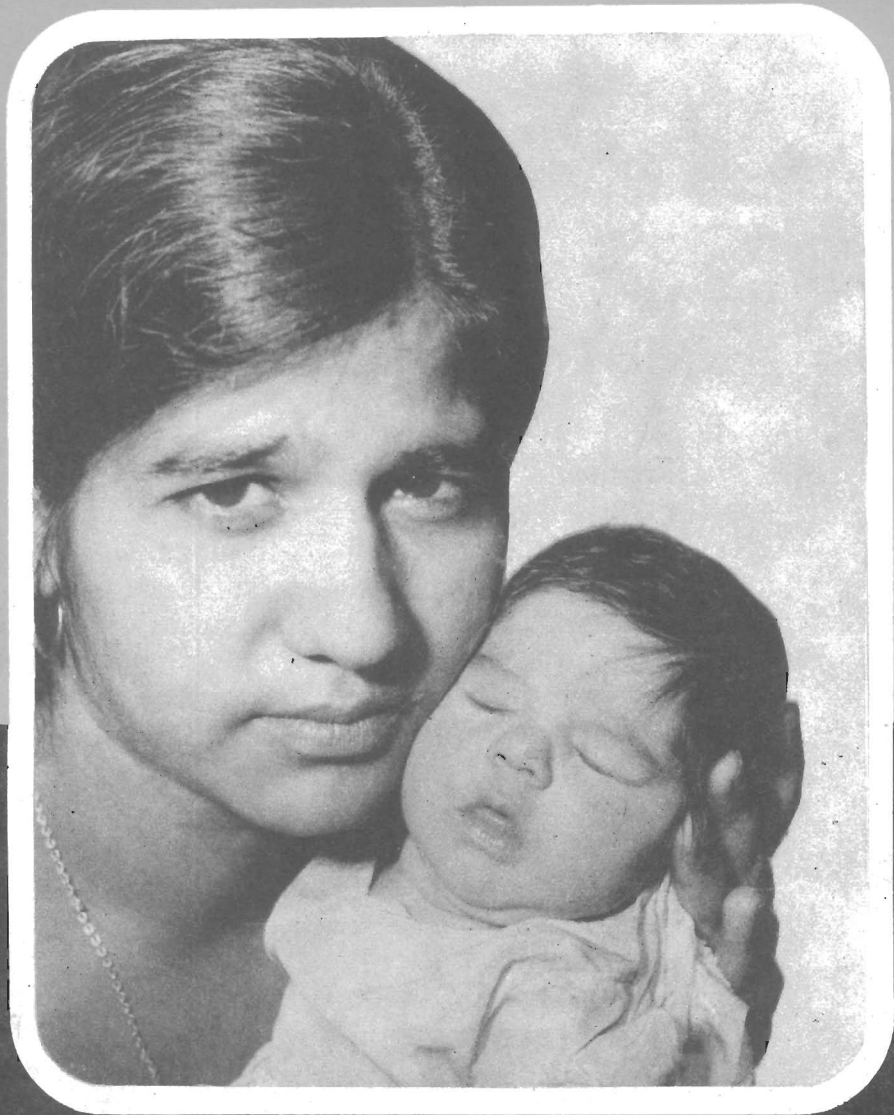




DIARRHOEA

Diagnosis, Treatment & Control

INTRODUCTION

Diarrhoea is a common disease affecting all the people in the country, specially young children. Every year, thousands of people suffer from this disease and many die. Though this disease can be easily prevented, people suffer from the same because of their unawareness of its prevention and control.

An attempt has been made through this booklet to educate the community, specially the mothers about diarrhoea and its remedial and preventive measures.

WHAT IS DIARRHOEA?

Any person passing three or more loose or watery stools in a day, can be termed as suffering from Diarrhoea.

WHAT CAUSES DIARRHOEA?

Diarrhoea is caused by some type of germs. These germs come out with the stool of a patient suffering from Diarrhoea. These germs are carried to the body of a healthy person through food, milk, water, fly, utensils, finger nails etc. Once the germs enter the body, one can get Diarrhoea.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN DIARRHOEA STARTS?

In Diarrhoea, patient loses water and salt from the body. If this continues, patient suffers from serious shortage of salt and specially water in the body leading to what is known as dehydration. This is a serious condition and if not corrected early, it can lead to death of the patient.

LOOK FOR THE FOLLOWING FEATURES IN A DIARRHOEAL PATIENT

1. Number of stools passed since onset, quantity, consistency and whether contains blood and mucous.
2. Whether associated with vomiting; pain in the 'abdomen.
3. Feeling thirsty, weak.
4. Tongue— whether dry.
5. Skin — cold , loose and sweating.

6. Fingers — wrinkled.
7. Eyes — sunken.
8. Body temperature — low.
9. Voice — may be hoarse, suppressed
10. Pulse — feeble.
11. Muscular Cramps in different parts of the body.
12. Fontanelle — whether depressed in young infants.
13. Urine — whether passing less and less urine and the flow is suppressed totally.
14. Convulsions and unconsciousness.

All these features may not appear immediately in a patient. But if some of these signs are present, it indicates that the patient needs special care.



WHAT IS TO BE DONE IF DIARRHOEA STARTS ?

1. Continue giving normal feed to the patient and do not keep him starving.
2. In case of infants, breast feeding must continue.
3. Giving more fluids to drink, which are easily available in the home such as,

Sharbat

Sikangi

Lassi

Butter milk

Weak tea

Green coconut water

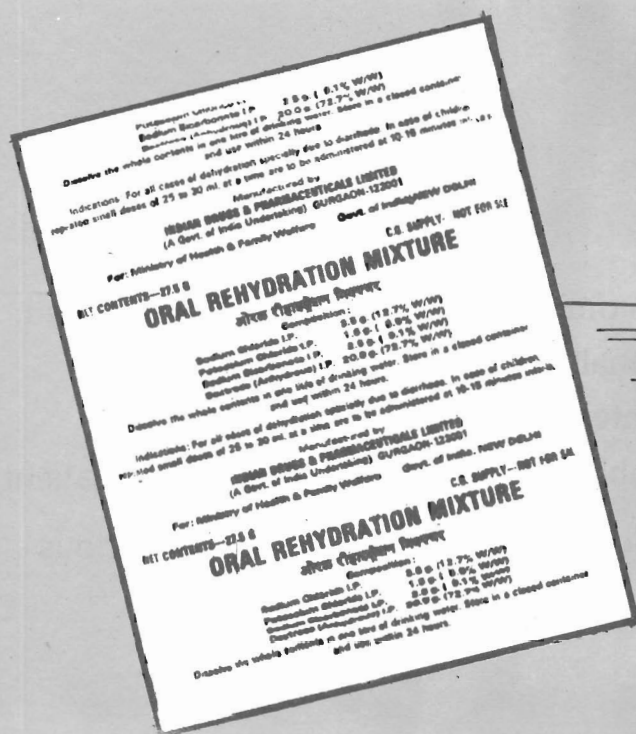
Rice water, etc.

4. If there is vomiting fluids should not be stopped, but only small quantities should be given at repeated intervals. Give as much fluid as the patient is able to drink. This will prevent the patient from developing dehydration which is a serious condition.

ORAL REHYDRATION SALT

If use of home made fluids does not improve the condition of the patient, please contact the Village Health Guide for free supply of oral rehydration salt packets. Each of the packets contains glucose, salts and soda (used in food) which are essential for treatment of dehydration. Once a packet is obtained, following steps are to be taken for preparation of the O.R. Solution.

- Wash hands properly with soap and water.
- Measure one litre of clean drinking water and pour it in



a clean container.

- Pour all the powder from one packet into the water, mix well until powder is completely dissolved.
- Taste the solution before use. O.R. Solution should be made fresh every day and any left out solution should be thrown away.

While infants and younger children may be given 2-4 teaspoonful every 5-10 minutes, older children and adults may drink as much they like from a glass or a cup.



PLEASE REMEMBER

1. Start giving fluids as soon as diarrhoea starts.
2. Fluids need not be stopped if there is vomiting, only small quantity is to be given repeatedly.
3. Fluids should continue till diarrhoea is not stopped.
4. There is no harm, if slightly more fluid is given to a patient.
5. Breast feeding should continue in case of young infants.
6. All patients should have their normal diet.



HOW TO CONTROL SPREAD OF DIARRHOEA ?

Diarrhoea can easily spread from a patient to other person. To prevent further spread, following measures are to be adopted:-

1. Always wash hands with soap and water before cooking, eating, or after visit to toilet.
2. Do not eat stale, rotten food, raw and unwashed vegetables and fruits and food



exposed to dust and fly.

3. Use safe water for drinking.
4. Wash utensils with clean water.
5. Keep food covered so that fly cannot sit over them.
6. Keep your surroundings clean, so that no fly can breed.



7. If proper latrine is not used and stool passed in the open, please cover the stool with earth so that fly cannot sit over the same.
8. Do not wash clothes containing stool of a diarrhoea patient in a pond or near a well or hand pump.
9. Keep finger nails short and maintain proper cleanliness.



REMEMBER

- Diarrhoea can be prevented easily by maintaining personal cleanliness.
- It can spread quickly from one person to another.
- Give plenty of fluids to drink as soon as diarrhoea starts.
- O.R.S. can be used when home made fluid is not of much use.
- Drugs are not of much help in diarrhoea.
- If you follow these simple rules, not only you can cut down sufferings of a patient, you can definitely prevent diarrhoea.
- Inform Village Health Guide if there is diarrhoea in the family or the village.

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