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Assessment of dehydration

OVERVIEW



Patients with diarrhoea, especially children, can lose a lot of fluids from their bodies and suffer dehydration.

This can cause very severe illness and sometimes death, especially in acute watery diarrhoea and cholera.

How to assess if a patient has dehydration and to what degree

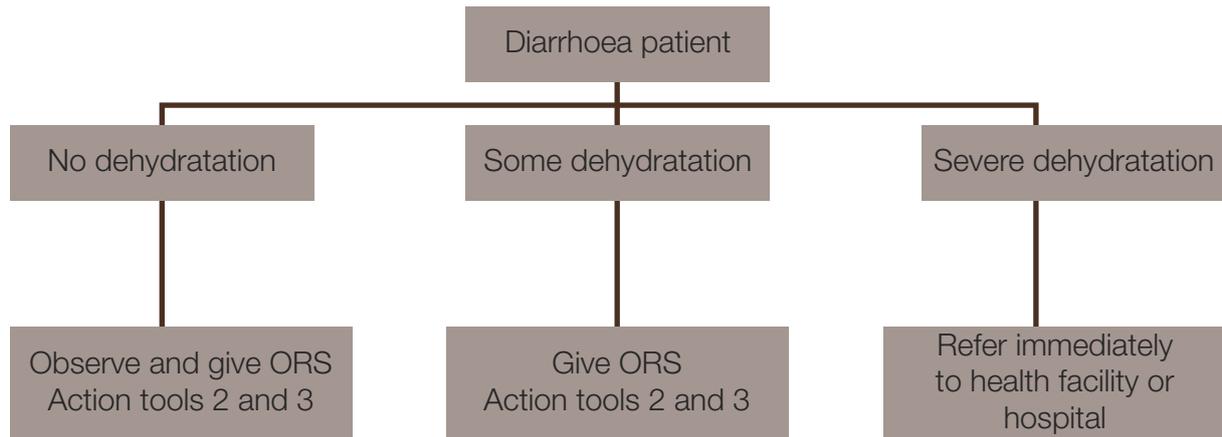
	No dehydration	Some dehydration	Severe dehydration
1. Look at			
Condition	Well, alert	Restless, irritable	Does not react or unconscious; floppy
Eyes	Normal	Sunken	Very sunken and dry
Tears	Present	Absent	Absent
Mouth and tongue	Moist	Dry	Very dry
Thirst	Drinks normally, not thirsty	Thirsty, drinks eagerly	Drinks poorly or not able to drink
2. Feel			
Skin pinch	Goes back quickly	Goes back slowly	Goes back very slowly
3. Action to take	Observe and give oral rehydration solution (ORS)	Give ORS	Refer immediately to health facility or hospital

Use community message(s): 1

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After the assessment, and according to the degree of dehydration, the following actions should be taken:



A dehydrated child



Skin pinch