

Essential drugs / Oral drugs

ORAL REHYDRATION SALTS = ORS

Indications

– Prevention and treatment of dehydration from acute diarrhoea, cholera, etc.

Forms and strengths

– Sachet of powder to be diluted in 1 litre of clean water.

– WHO formulation:

	grams/litre		mmol/litre
sodium chloride	2.6	sodium	75
glucose	13.5	chloride	65
potassium chloride	1.5	glucose	75
trisodium citrate	2.9	potassium	20
		citrate	10
Total weight	20.5	Total osmolarity	245

Dosage

– *Prevention of dehydration (WHO - Treatment plan A)*

Child under 24 months: 50 to 100 ml after each loose stool (approximately 500 ml daily)

Child from 2 to 10 years: 100 to 200 ml after each loose stool (approximately 1000 ml daily)

Child over 10 years and adult: 200 to 400 ml after each loose stool (approximately 2000 ml daily)

– *Treatment of moderate dehydration (WHO - Treatment plan B)*

Child and adult:

Over the first four hours:

Age	under 4 months	4 to 11 months	12 to 23 months	2 to 4 years	5 to 14 years	15 years and over
Weight	under 5 kg	5 to 7.9 kg	8 to 10.9 kg	11 to 15.9 kg	16 to 29.9 kg	30 kg and over
ORS in ml	200 to 400	400 to 600	600 to 800	800 to 1200	1200 to 2200	2200 to 4000

After four hours:

If there are no signs of dehydration: follow *Treatment plan A*.

If there are signs of moderate dehydration: repeat *Treatment plan B*.

If there are signs of severe dehydration: start IV therapy (*Treatment plan C*).

– *Treatment of severe dehydration (WHO - T*

In combination with IV therapy and only to a

Child and adult: 5 ml/kg per hour

After 3 hours (6 hours in infants), reassess and choose the appropriate plan A, B or C.

Duration

– As long as diarrhoea and signs of dehydration persist.

Contra-indications, adverse effects, precautions

– If the eyelids become puffy during the treatment: stop ORS, give plain water then, resume ORS according to Treatment plan A when the puffiness is gone.

– If case of vomiting, stop ORS for 10 min and then resume at a slower rate (very small, frequent, amounts); do not stop rehydration.

– Pregnancy: no contra-indication

– Breast-feeding: no contra-indication

Remarks

– A special ORS-formula, ReSoMal, is used under medical supervision, for severely malnourished children only. However, in malnourished children with cholera, standard ORS- formula is used instead of ReSoMal.

– Storage: below 25 °C - $\overline{\text{T}}$

Do not use the powder if it has turned into a yellow-brownish sticky substance.

Once prepared, the solution must be used within 24 hours.