

Oral Rehydration Solution – homemade

Preparing an Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) at home is straightforward and can be lifesaving in situations of dehydration, especially due to diarrhea or vomiting. Here's a simple recipe recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO):

Ingredients

- Clean Water: 1 liter (about 5 cups)
- Sugar: 6 level teaspoons
- Salt: ½ level teaspoon

Instructions

1. **Clean Water**: Ensure the water is clean and safe to drink. If in doubt, boil the water for at least one minute and then let it cool.
2. **Mixing**: In the liter of clean water, dissolve the sugar and salt thoroughly. It's crucial to mix the exact amounts to ensure the correct electrolyte balance.
3. **Storage**: Store the ORS in a clean, closed container. If not used immediately, you can keep it in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours. Discard any ORS that hasn't been used within 24 hours.
4. **Usage**: Drink the ORS in small sips frequently, especially after each loose stool.
5. **For Children**: If giving ORS to a child, use a spoon or syringe to give it slowly, especially if the child is not feeling well.
6. **Dosage**: There is no strict limit to how much ORS you can consume. The key is to keep hydrated.

Important Notes

- **Correct Proportions**: It's vital to use the correct proportions of sugar and salt, as too much sugar can worsen diarrhea, and too much salt can be harmful, especially for children.

- **No Substitutions**: Don't substitute ingredients. Ingredients like honey or rice water are not suitable replacements for sugar or salt.

- **Symptoms Watch**: While ORS helps with dehydration, it does not cure the underlying cause of diarrhea or vomiting. If symptoms persist or worsen, seek medical attention.

- **For Infants**: For infants, continue breastfeeding along with ORS.

ORS is effective in preventing and treating mild to moderate dehydration, especially in cases of acute gastroenteritis. However, in cases of severe dehydration or if the person is unable to keep fluids down, immediate medical attention is necessary.