

Oral Rehydration Formula: DIY!

In an emergency, you or a member of your family may become dehydrated from lack of water intake, moderate to severe diarrhea, heavy bleeding, severe burns, etc. There are several formulas for rehydration salts to be added to distilled or boiled water. The easiest way is to use a 2-liter soda pop bottle. (For oral rehydration purposes, liters = quarts.)

World Health Organization recipe for rehydration salts

Dissolve in 2 liters (quarts) of drinking water:

Caution: Do not boil solution

40 grams / 6 teaspoons Sugar [40 grams = 3 tsp honey or corn syrup]

7 grams / 1 teaspoon Salt (NaCl)

3 grams / 1/2 teaspoon Light Salt (KCl) [3 grams = 4 cups orange/apple juice]

5 grams / 1 teaspoon Baking Soda (Na₂CO₃)

Take orally per age or per doctor:

Infants - 1 liter over a 24 hour period

Children - 1 liter over an 8-24 hour period

Adults - 3 liters per 24 hour period

Treat dehydration immediately, especially in infants. Sip every 5 minutes, day and night, even if vomiting occurs, until normal urination. Continue feeding as well as drinking if possible.

If you use solid ingredients, you can make up packets of rehydration salts in advance. Commercial oral rehydration packets are available. They're no better than what you can make yourself.

Oral rehydration salts are particularly important for infants or small children with diarrhea, who can get badly dehydrated from this!