Transmission

- Contaminated food
- Unwashed hands
- Water contaminated with human waste (stools)

Symptoms

- Three or more loose or liquid stools over a period of 24 hours.
- Possible stomach pains, fever, nausea and vomiting.
- Can cause dehydration, sepsis and death.

Prevention

- Safe, clean water (including a clean, covered water container in the household).
- Use appropriate sanitation facilities (sound, clean latrine).
- Wash hands with soap (especially after using the toilet or cleaning a baby).
- Good food hygiene (thoroughly cooked food, covered food, clean utensils, etc.).
- Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life.
- Social mobilization and behaviour change communication.
- Routine vaccination for rotavirus.

Vulnerable people

- Children under five, malnourished children.
- People living with HIV.
- Pregnant women.
- People living in areas that have poor water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and services.

If an epidemic occurs

- Initiate community-based surveillance.
- Treat mild cases in the community by providing oral rehydration solution and zinc supplementation.
- Detect and refer serious cases to health facilities.
- Promote good food hygiene (well-cooked food, covered food, clean utensils etc.).
- Encourage breastfeeding and continued breastfeeding when the baby or child is sick.
- Promote safe, clean water (including a clean, covered water container in the household).
- Promote use of appropriate sanitation facilities (sound, clean latrines)
- Promote handwashing with soap (especially after using the toilet or cleaning a baby).
- Increase social mobilization and behaviour change communication.
- Promote recommended health practices.
Encourage exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life – including when a child is sick. A dehydrated child may experience the following: sunken eyes, dry mouth, lethargic/weak, skin pinch returns slowly, or little or no urine
Volunteer actions

See the following action tools for more information on what actions to take against acute diarrhoeal disease:

1. Community-based surveillance
2. Community mapping
3. Communicating with the community
4. Referral to health facilities
5. Volunteer protection and safety
6. Assessment of dehydration
7. Preparing an oral rehydration solution (ORS)
8. Giving oral rehydration solution (ORS)
9. Zinc supplementation
10. Managing fever
11. Breastfeeding
12. Infant and young child feeding in emergencies
13. Measuring acute malnutrition in emergencies
14. Measuring the height and weight of children
15. Measuring mid upper arm circumference (MUAC)
16. Measuring oedema (water retention) in children
17. Psychosocial support (Psychological first aid (PFA))
18. Hygiene promotion
19. Clean, safe household water
20. Good food hygiene
21. Sanitation
22. Assainissement
23. Building and maintaining latrines
24. Handwashing with soap
25. Preparing and using disinfectants
26. Social mobilization and behaviour change