

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

# VHT

Village Health Team

*A handbook to improve health in communities*

*“HEALTH IS MADE AT HOME”*

*VHT is a way for you and your family and neighbours to improve your health. By taking action at home - in the way you live and care for yourself and your family.*



# CONTENTS

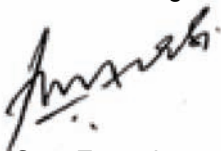
<b>FOREWORD</b> .....	ii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	iii
<b>KEY</b> .....	iv
<b>VHT</b>	
Purpose.....	1
Responsibilities.....	3
Record Keeping .....	15
Tools .....	19
<b>DISEASES</b>	
Malaria .....	27
Sexually Transmitted Diseases .....	31
Tuberculosis (TB) .....	39
Preventable Diseases.....	43
Tropical Diseases.....	54
<b>REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH</b>	
Having a Baby .....	67
Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health.....	81
<b>FAMILY WELL BEING</b>	
Family Health .....	85
Child Health .....	90
Immunization .....	96
Violence and Families .....	100
<b>THE WAY WE LIVE</b>	
Lifestyles .....	103
Nutrition .....	108
Sanitation .....	117
Water .....	124
Oral Health .....	127
Mental Health .....	130
People with Disabilities .....	134

## FOREWORD

The Ministry of Health is implementing the Village Health Team (VHT) strategy to ensure that every village in Uganda has village health team members who work together to mobilize individuals and households for better health. VHT members are community volunteers who are selected by communities to provide accurate health information, mobilize communities and provide linkage to health services. As part of the process of implementing this strategy, the Ministry and partners decided to review, update and publish a VHT Handbook to act as a resource and reference book for VHTs, VHT Trainers, facilitators, Community Leaders, NGOs, CBOs and other implementing partners.

The Consultative process was supported by the Support to Health Strategic Sector Plan Project II (SHSSPP II), WHO and UNICEF who also supported training and placing of pilot Village Health Teams (VHT) in pilot districts. VHTs are trained in the minimum health care package as well as other add-on modules that meet community health needs. VHTs play a big role in mobilizing communities for better health, referral and follow-up of individuals in the community to the nearest health centers.

This Handbook has been extensively developed and reviewed with input from a SubTechnical Working Group with representatives from Divisions and Programs within the MOH, district health education teams and development partners. Specific technical assistance in writing for a community audience, editing and layout has been provided by Health Communication Partnership, with financial support from USAID. Special thanks go to the following organizations for their participation throughout the review and consultative process; WHO, UNICEF, Plan Uganda, AMREF, World Vision, SHSSPP II, Mpigi, Mukono, Kabale and Lira District Health Teams and all Village Health Team members. Thank you all for your contribution and support in implementing the VHT strategy. We look forward to your continued participation and support as we scale up implementation of the VHT strategy to all districts and villages in Uganda.



Dr. Sam Zaramba

Director General of Health Services

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### CONTENT

WHO, UNICEF and SAVE the CHILDREN in Uganda, for technical content on Danger Signs, Safe Motherhood and breastfeeding

### PHOTOS

Anne Musisi, HCP, Cheshire Homes

This VHT handbook has been made in colour Chapters for you to follow more easily.

Chapter 1	VHT
Chapter 2	DISEASES
Chapter 3	REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
Chapter 4	FAMILY WELL BEING
Chapter 5	THE WAY WE LIVE

**You will find these symbols to help you know what to do**



Hand = to prevent something by learning a good habit



Stop = to control something from spreading to yourself and other people



Tablets = to treat an illness with medicine



Wheelchair = to give extra support and care for somebody who needs it



Attention = to have special training to be able to do this.

**These signs at the bottom of the page will help you to quickly find the topic you need to look at.**

### 1 VHT



VHT = Purpose



= Responsibilities



= Record keeping



= Tools

### 2 DISEASES



= Malaria



= STDs (HIV)



= TB



= Preventable diseases



= Tropical diseases

### 3 REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH



= Family Planning



= Having a baby



= Adolescent sexual health

### 4 FAMILY WELL BEING



= Family health



= Child health



= Immunization



= Violence

### 5 THE WAY WE LIVE



= Lifestyles



= Nutrition



= Sanitation



= Water



= Oral health



= Mental health



= PWDs

When you see this below it has a **KEY MESSAGE** for how you can best advise your community to be and stay healthy



**What to tell your community**

When you see this box it has **TIPS** which can help VHT know how to do things



When you see this arrow know this is an important **ACTION** you must do



“HEALTH IS MADE AT HOME”

***VHT is a way for you, your family and neighbours to improve your health. By taking action at home in the way you live and care for yourself and your family.***

## CHAPTER 1



VHT

A Village Health Team (VHT) are people chosen by their own community to promote the health and well being of all village members.

PURPOSE





## What is VHT?

The VHT is a team that:

- ✓ mobilizes the community for health action
- ✓ promotes health to prevent disease
- ✓ treats simple illness at home
- ✓ checks for danger signs in the community
- ✓ reports and refers community sickness to health workers
- ✓ keeps village records up to date

## What is the purpose of VHT?

***Improve the health of our communities***

***Record information and help HCII plan the health services needed for the community***

## How are VHT members selected?

Communities select VHT members after agreeing who they want to represent them. These people will have the best skills and experience and want to be volunteers for their community.

## What should guide the voting?

The people chosen should be:

- ◆ Willing to volunteer for the good of the community.
- ◆ Respected and trustworthy village resident a loyal and trustworthy person.
- ◆ Have previous experience volunteering or working in health or interested in health and development.

**Involve Community Medicine Distributors,  
Community Drug Distributors, TBAs, CORPS  
and other respected community health  
providers in the Village Health Team**

## CHAPTER 1



VHT

*Roles are activities which VHT members carry out in their communities.*

# RESPONSIBILITIES





Action for community improvement



Taking to the health unit with danger sign



Infection control during outbreak of disease



Referral for services



Treatment support at home



Family Planning in the community





Giving information to health unit



Planning with community leaders



Health education



Outreach to adolescents



## What are the tasks of VHT?

TASKS	ACTIVITY	REASON
<b>RECORD</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Community map</li> <li>2. Village Register</li> <li>3. Births and deaths</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Know my village and community</li> <li>2.Details for every home and family</li> <li>3.Up to date knowledge of village members</li> </ol>
<b>MODEL</b>	Practice what I teach	For community to see me healthy and copy my good role model
<b>SAVE LIVES</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Know danger signs</li> <li>2.Refer to nearest HC</li> <li>3.Make sure all children are immunized</li> <li>4.All pregnant women for checks before and after birth</li> <li>5.All newborn babies to be checked</li> <li>6. Giving treatment at home</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Get health care</li> <li>2.Go for treatment and checks</li> <li>3.To prevent diseases and disability</li> <li>4.Reduce deaths of women and babies</li> <li>5.Reduce deaths of babies</li> <li>6. To cure simple sickness</li> </ol>
<b>LINK</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Health unit and health workers to my village</li> <li>2.My village gets health services it needs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Plan health activities together</li> <li>2.Build up a healthy community</li> </ol>
<b>MOBILIZE</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Village for health activities</li> <li>2.Health workers to attend to community</li> <li>3.Report diseases in my village</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.To be a healthy community</li> <li>2.Outreach services eg Child Health days VCT, Immunization, FP, ante/post natal care</li> <li>3.Respond to outbreaks of diseases and treat and prevent spread to others</li> </ol>
<b>VISIT</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Patients at home</li> <li>2.My neighbors for healthy habits</li> <li>3.Community groups for health talks</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Be sure they are taking their treatment</li> <li>2.Improve hygiene and care</li> <li>3.Give advice for people to change habits</li> </ol>
<b>SUPPORT</b>	PWD/ HIV+ and neighbors with problems	To see they are Ok or if they need help and to refer to people who can help



## What basic health services will be given by VHT?

### Advice and information will be given on:

#### *DISEASES*

- ▶ Giving treatment and managing simple illness at home
- ▶ Sexually transmitted diseases (HIV/AIDS, )
- ▶ Tuberculosis (TB)

#### *FAMILIES*

- ▶ Family Planning (child spacing)
- ▶ Pregnancy, delivery and care of new born baby
- ▶ Adolescent sexual and reproductive health
- ▶ Breast feeding
- ▶ Food and nutrition
- ▶ Abuse and violence
- ▶ Immunization
- ▶ Mental health

#### *THE HOME*

- ▶ Water and sanitation
- ▶ Hygiene
- ▶ First Aid

### How will this be done?

- ▶ Community mapping
- ▶ Community registers
- ▶ Home visits
- ▶ Talking with neighbours about health issues which have been found

### What should community members do?

- ▶ Select and support VHT
- ▶ Attend village health events
- ▶ Use health services
- ▶ Improve personal and family health

### What should local leaders do?

- ▶ Inform communities about VHT
- ▶ Advocacy for health at home
- ▶ Mobilize communities for health
- ▶ Supervision of VHT activities
- ▶ Give financial support
- ▶ Planning for VHT in district and village health plans
- ▶ Attend and support health events





## Inform and support your your neighbours and families to improve their health

### COMMUNITY MAPPING

As VHT you need to know where everything is in your community. Part of mapping is keeping a VHT Register this is found in RECORD KEEPING later in this chapter.

This is making a map of your local community. It shows where all the things are located like: roads, all health providers (eg drug sellers, TBAs, health facilities), water sources, schools, places of worship, groups (eg women's), leader's homes, homes with children under 5 years, where people who can help live (teachers).

#### How is a map made?

This is done by the VHT team members on the ground by using a stick and stones or leaves to mark the places. It will be very helpful for your work and is very easy to then make into a drawing on a big paper, marking all the important places and where people stay.

#### What is the map used for?

When planning community activities and when directing people for support. to show risks: like flood areas, community groups, health dangers (landmines, stagnant water, rubbish dumps etc). Deciding what the health needs in the community are.

### HOME VISITING

Home visiting is a way to find out the health and social needs of individuals and families.

- ◆ The first home visit will: find out the information about the home like number of people living there, any pregnant women, children under 5, people with disabilities or any illnesses eg TB, malaria or things people tell you.
- ◆ Visits after this are usually to deal with a particular problem or to give advice and information. For example referral for ante natal care, giving a bednet, sanitation and nutrition information, home treatment for malaria or DOTS for TB.
- ◆ Other times home visits will be to invite the members to attend a health event like immunization, HCT, community drug distribution or drama shows.



- ◆ Sometimes visits will need to be made when there is a health risk in the village. Working with health workers during an outbreak of a disease or to mobilize action for improving water and sanitation conditions or responding to an emergency.

### What skills are needed for a home visit?

VHT members should have the following skills to be able to make home visits.

- ✓ Get on well with neighbours
- ✓ Know about health
- ✓ See danger signs
- ✓ Always able to report events in the community
- ✓ Willing to listen to others
- ✓ Respect for self and others
- ✓ Do not judge people and can keep privacy (secrecy)

### What are the steps in carrying out a home visit?

#### 1) Before the visit

- ▶ What is the reason for visit?
- ▶ Is the home on your map and family in the Village Register?
- ▶ What health services do they need?

#### 2) The visit

- ▶ Explain the reason for your visit
- ▶ Check for any danger signs
- ▶ Listen to their problem
- ▶ Agree together what needs to be done and who will do it and when

#### 3) After the visit

- ▶ Carry out the agreed actions
- ▶ Record the details in your Register
- ▶ Check what follow up is needed
- ▶ Report your actions (on forms and to supervisor)

### What are the reasons for home visiting?

- 1 To see any danger signs and save lives
- 2 To link people to health services to improve their lives
- 3 To provide care and support to people in their homes
- 4 To help change health habits
- 5 To make sure medicines are taken correctly
- 6 To take records of what is in the home





## Who should be visited in their homes?

**All homes should be visited and focus should be on:**

- ◆ People who the health worker has asked me to help
- ◆ Pregnant mothers
- ◆ Babies and young children
- ◆ People with disabilities (PWD)
- ◆ Mentally ill patients
- ◆ People with social problems
- ◆ The elderly

### **Tips for home visits**

- ✓ Make sure it is a good time for the visit
- ✓ Listen to the members of the home
- ✓ Look for any danger signs
- ✓ Agree on the problem together
- ✓ Decide together the best action and write down who will do what
- ✓ Give a brief report for the referral person

**Make home visits often to your community members to know how to give them support and refer them for more help**



## SAVING LIVES

This is when something unexpected happens and action must be taken immediately to save people's lives. Basic First Aid can be used in an emergency to save lives.

### How will VHT members handle emergencies?

1. VHT should go if asked to a place or person.
2. VHT should help the patient and give first aid if trained and take immediately to the nearest health unit **ONLY** if they are able to move.
3. If the patient cannot move the VHT should send a message to the nearest health facility and explain the problem so that help can be sent.

### What are some types of emergencies?

cause	injury/sign	action
burn	scalded skin	cool with clean water do not put vaseline
swallowing	poison	take to health worker immediately with container
snake/animal	bite	wash and clean area cover with clean cloth, take to health worker
accident	broken limb	put in recovery position, only move if safe
fever/ epilepsy	convulsions	put in recovery position and keep airway clear. refer urgently to health worker

### What is the recovery position?

This is the way to put somebody when they are not breathing normally or if they are unconscious (means are not awake).



- ▶ Turn the person to the side to stop them choking
- ▶ Keep the neck forward and rest face on hand like in the picture
- ▶ Bend one leg to keep the body from rolling

**NOTE:** If the neck is damaged this position cannot be used.





- 1 Give First Aid if you are trained and refer the person for medical attention.**
- 2 Volunteer for First Aid training at your local Red Cross branch**

## SHARING

This is when VHT members do any training courses and learn new skills and information. This is shared with the other VHT team members and local health providers. For example: First Aid, knowing dangers signs for new born babies, DOTS (Direct observed treatment support), how to manage fevers at home.

**It is very important to share information with the following people:**

- ◆ Team members
- ◆ Local health providers
- ◆ Your community through activities and one to one advice

This will help to bridge any gaps and make sure that information is used correctly and to those who need to know it. It will also mean that the people involved in health care and support are aware of the same things.

## TRAINING

VHTs will receive basic training and some will be given special training to be able to do extra things like:

- ◆ First Aid
- ◆ Community Case Management of sick children
- ◆ Give out Family Planning products
- ◆ Counseling
- ◆ Home based care
- ◆ Knowing danger signs, especially for newborn babies and mothers
- ◆ Neglected tropical diseases etc.

The type of training will depend on the needs of your community and how far away the nearest health unit is.

Where you see this training symbol, know that you should refer the person unless you have been given special training to help.



VHT can help to refer people when they cannot help or when seeing any danger signs. From your community map you should know of the different health providers in your community and where they can be found.

### Referral Checklist

- ✓ Always refer for something you have not been trained to do
- ✓ When seeing any danger sign
- ✓ In an emergency situation
- ✓ For specialist care and treatment of a condition like STDs, mental health, TB, complicated malaria, diarrhea, pneumonia
- ✓ For health services and counseling like family planning, HIV testing or PMTCT
- ✓ To report a problem in a family like violence
- ✓ For more medication like ARVs, TB drugs, ACTs
- ✓ When you run out of medication which your patient needs
- ✓ For immunization

**You are not a trained health worker so the best way you can help is to refer people needing health care.**



## PRIVACY (SECRECY)

This is when information that somebody gives you is kept private (secret). It is called CONFIDENTIAL. It means that you do not tell other people what somebody has told you, except the health worker for referral.

### Why is it important to keep information private?

- ◆ To keep the trust of your community
- ◆ To stop gossip and rumour spreading in the village
- ◆ To protect people from attacks by others
- ◆ To make sure it is not changed by others

### Why happens when privacy is not kept?

- ◆ If you tell another person they can tell somebody else who can tell somebody else
- ◆ Your community will not be able to trust and confide in you when they need your help
- ◆ Families might not give all the information you need
- ◆ You may not know what is really happening in your community

### How can keeping privacy help VHT?

- ✓ Some members of the community might share information which you are not trained to help with eg HIV positive status, violence in the home
- ✓ The health worker can help to give the services the person needs when you refer them
- ✓ You do not need to repeat everything when you refer as the health worker will ask the person to tell them
- ✓ Everyone will be comfortable to approach you as they know you will honour their secrets

### Tips for privacy

- ✓ Make sure you can't be overheard by others
- ✓ Keep all records in a safe place where your family will not look at them
- ✓ Do not repeat private things to other people
- ✓ When you refer give brief details so you allow the other person to tell the health worker
- ✓ Do not gossip in the village about anything
- ✓ Always be friendly, respectful and non-judgmental



## CHAPTER 1



VHT

Record keeping is the writing and keeping of information. It is used for planning and improving services in the future.

# RECORD KEEPING



## What is record keeping for VHT?

It is the keeping of information on the health of every household member in the community. It involves notes on good health practices (behaviours) in the community.

## Why is record keeping important?

- ◆ To record household health in the Registers (like births, pregnancies, childhood illness)
- ◆ To plan for health actions needed in your village (like protecting water sources, HIV testing, Child Health Days, Immunization campaigns)
- ◆ To encourage people to take action for their own health (like washing hands, balanced diet, immunization)
- ◆ To help the district to provide health services you need (outreach, post natal care, bednets)

## How will VHT keep records?

This will be done in a VHT Record Book which gives instructions for when each detail must be reported. The VHT basic training will also teach VHTs how to fill in this record book. The Community Map is to be drawn on the first page and should be updated with any new changes as they happen in your village.

When each record needs to be kept is covered in the next section below REPORTING.

## What are the steps in record keeping?

- 1) Sit down with the other Team members and the community map and agree who does what, where and when.
- 2) Working as a team go house by house and fill in the village Register
- 3) Explain to your neighbours about what the Register is for and that the information is private.
- 4) Ask them to let you know when there are any changes.
- 5) Keep the Registers in a safe place as the details are private and should not be read by others.



**Be brief and clear so the information is useful and can be easily shared with health providers**



### Tip: for record keeping

- ✓ WHEN? Home visits
- ✓ WHO? Pregnant women, children under five, patients
- ✓ WHAT? Births, deaths, illnesses, special needs  
treatment support (ARVs/  
TB/Sick people)  
health improvement (hygiene,  
nutrition)  
children going to school

## REPORTING

### How will VHTs report?

There will be 2 ways:

1. Recording in the VHT Record book and getting this information to the right person (supervisor)
2. Meetings at the Health Unit for supervision and sharing your information

The number of times may vary in different districts and how often VHTs are supervised by their local Health Unit depending on the local needs and workload. VHT should meet with their supervisor at least every month.

### Why is reporting important?

- ◆ To be able to make summary records for each village which can be added to health unit and district information
- ◆ To keep track of VHT activities and note behaviour changes in the community
- ◆ Some Government Departments like Uganda Bureau of Statistics will need the information (births and deaths) and Ministry of Health to know which health problems are at community level for planning services

### How will VHT know when to report?

The basic VHT training and VHT Record book will explain the exact details. There will be minimum national standards which need to be followed. Some areas may require more information especially when there are special needs like for a disease outbreak, or no health facilities nearby.





Use this as a general guide for when and how to report

ACTION	Immediate	As seen	Week	Month	Quarter	Year	HOW
Danger signs	✓						Refer Record book
Emergency Unsafe water	✓						Refer Report LC
Diseases	✓						Record book/ refer
Birth/Death		✓					Record book
Sick people		✓					Refer Record book
Pregnancy		✓					Refer Record book
Immunization		✓					Record book
VHT meeting			✓				Meeting
Outreach eg HCT, FP				✓			Activity Record book
Health Summary + Supervision				✓			Record book Health Unit Supervisor
Treatment				✓			Report to Health Unit
Health Talk					✓		Record book
Children in school					✓		Education dept
VHT review					✓		District review
Pit latrines					✓		Record book
Clean water access						✓	Record book
Child Health Days						✓	Record book
Community Drug Distribution						✓	Record book
Village Register						✓	Record book



**Use the VHT Record Book to help report your work**



## CHAPTER 1



VHT

These are a set of guidelines, skills and useful tips which can help make the work of the VHT easier.

TOOLS



## MOBILIZING COMMUNITIES

This means calling and bringing community members together for an activity – like a health talk, immunization, mobile HIV counselling and testing services or a health survey.

### Why do communities need to be mobilized?

When people become involved they can get information which can help them to make better decisions about their lives. They can learn better ways of doing things, like sanitation and nutrition which can improve their health.

### Who should mobilize communities?

**These people can help to bring together members of the community:**

- ◆ Traditional leaders
- ◆ Traditional healers
- ◆ Religious leaders
- ◆ Headmasters/mistresses and teachers
- ◆ Burial groups
- ◆ Micro finance groups
- ◆ Farmers groups
- ◆ Drug shop attendants
- ◆ Women leaders
- ◆ Community-based organization leaders
- ◆ Market masters
- ◆ Retired civil servants
- ◆ LC members
- ◆ Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs)
- ◆ Youth leaders



**Get others to help mobilize community members  
and give enough notice to make sure people  
are available**



## COMMUNICATION

This is the sending and receiving of messages. It can involve only two people or a group of many people. It may use speech or visual images to give the message. Body language is also important as it gives signs of how a person is feeling.

### What are some ways to communicate with members of the community?

- ◆ Interpersonal Communication (IPC) (Person to person)
- ◆ Community drama
- ◆ Drumming
- ◆ Posters
- ◆ One-to-one counselling
- ◆ Community-based groups
- ◆ Public announcements (schools, churches, mosques and other public gatherings)
- ◆ Public address system
- ◆ Town announcers
- ◆ Community meetings
- ◆ Discussions with household members
- ◆ Training sessions
- ◆ Opinion leaders

### How is a public announcement made?

A public announcement to be used in public places will be one of the regular tasks of the VHT member. This can be used as a guide:

What is the issue?	... Re-treatment of bed nets
Who is doing what?	... The Ministry of Health
Where is the activity going to take place?	... At the Chairman's residence
When is the activity taking place?	... On Saturday May 10, 2009
What is the benefit?	... Using mosquito treated bed nets will protect you and your family against mosquitoes that transmit malaria.
Who is announcing?	... Mrs. Okello your VHT member



### **Tips for Communication**

- ✓ Note the body language
- ✓ Try to understand how the person is feeling
- ✓ Listen by looking at the person
- ✓ Be patient
- ✓ Use local terms for illnesses
- ✓ Be clear with your message
- ✓ Check the person has understood by asking them questions
- ✓ Note the action points

**Keep communication simple for people to understand clearly.**



# DISEASES



These are illnesses which are dangerous to people's health and sometimes can kill or harm them. Often they can spread easily to other people.

# DISEASES

There are many types of diseases many of which can be prevented, controlled or treated. Some are life threatening but many can be cured with treatment. Others can be controlled by improving the environment to stop them spreading. People can be helped to recover from them (rehabilitation).



## PREVENTION

This means doing things to avoid the disease or contact with conditions which can make it spread or harm others, for example handwashing can save lives. eg when the person helping at birth and the mother wash their hands then the mother and baby don't die from infections.



## CONTROL

This means taking action to limit the damage the disease can have on a person or a community, like stopping neighbours from defaecating in a water source.



## TREATMENT

This is the medication which can be taken by the patient to limit or remove the disease from their body. It is important for patients to complete their treatment and follow all instructions for taking their medicine given by the health provider. Treatment also includes giving first aid. VHT members will be given special training on how to treat some illnesses at home.



## REHABILITATION

This is extra care and support which a person may need to improve the quality of their life. For example, moving a paralyzed limb to stop stiffness. Sometimes this will involve using physical aids like wheel chair, artificial limb, hearing device or having special training to do things.

### How can VHT make a difference?

- ✓ Inform the community about infection control, immunization to reduce spread of diseases
- ✓ Prevent diseases by improving habits at home
- ✓ Treatment support like observing home treatment for TB, HIV, malaria
- ✓ Refer people with danger signs immediately to save lives

### What is the situation in Uganda?

VHTs all over Uganda will receive basic training on health and disease prevention and knowing how to find the health problems in your community. Many VHTs have been trained in Home Based Management of Fever (HBMF). This will now be part of Community Case Management of sick children. VHTs will also be given extra training to do this.

In this training you will learn how to recognize danger signs and how to manage some cases at home (see TRAINING in VHT blue chapter).



## DANGER SIGNS



Some problems are Danger Signs. A danger sign shows that a person, usually a child, is too ill for you and the family to treat in the community. You do not have the medicines the child needs. To help the child survive, you must URGENTLY refer him or her to the health facility. A trained health worker there can know more what is wrong and treat them.



## HOME TREATMENT

Families can treat some sick children at home with the help of VHT. If you have the right medicine, they can care for children with diarrhoea, fever, and fast breathing.

***These danger signs are known from the answers given by caregivers to your questions.***

## COUGH

A child who has had cough for 14 days or more has a danger sign. The child may have tuberculosis (TB), asthma, whooping cough, or another problem. The child needs to be looked at more closely and treated at the health facility. Refer immediately. Sometimes cough is with a fever and needs to be checked by a health worker.

## DIARRHOEA

Diarrhoea often stops on its own in 3 or 4 days. Diarrhoea for 7 days or more, however, is a danger sign. It may be a sign of a severe disease. The diarrhoea will lead to malnutrition. Diarrhoea can also cause dehydration, when the body loses more fluids than are being replaced. If not treated, dehydration results in death. Refer immediately.

## BLOOD IN STOOL

Diarrhoea with blood in the stool, with or without mucus, is dysentery. If there is blood in the stool, the child needs medicine that you do not have. Refer this child.

## FEVER

Most fevers go away within a few days. Fever that has lasted for 7 days or more can mean that the child has a severe disease, like typhoid or yellow fever. The fever does not have to show every day, all the time. Refer a child who has had fever for the last 7 (or more) days for more assessment and treatment at the health facility.



## CONVULSIONS

A convulsion during the child's current illness is a danger sign. A serious infection or a high fever may be the cause of the convulsion. The health facility must give the right medicine and find out the cause. Refer a child with convulsions immediately.

## NOT ABLE TO DRINK OR EAT ANYTHING

One of the first signs that a child is very sick is that they cannot drink or swallow. Dehydration is a risk. Also, if the child is not able to drink or eat anything, then the child will not be able to swallow oral medicine. Refer this child.

## VOMITS EVERYTHING

When the child vomits everything, the child cannot hold down any food or drink at all. The child will not be able to replace the fluids lost during vomiting and is in danger from dehydration. A child who vomits everything also cannot take oral medicine. Refer immediately.

***These danger signs are identified by looking at the child.***

## CHEST INDRAWING



This is the sucking in of the stomach when breathing and can be a sign of severe pneumonia. This child will need the right medicine for severe pneumonia. Refer this child immediately. See PNEUMONIA in preventable diseases in this chapter.

## VERY SLEEPY OR UNCONSCIOUS

A child who is very sleepy is not alert and falls back to sleep after moving. An unconscious child cannot awaken. There could be many reasons. The child is very sick and needs to go to the health facility urgently to find out the cause and get the right treatment. Refer this child immediately.

## RED ON MUAC STRAP



Red on the MUAC (mid upper arm circumference) strap shows severe malnutrition. The child needs to be seen at a health facility to receive proper care and to find out the cause of the severe malnutrition. Refer a child who has a red reading on the MUAC strap. (see MALNUTRITION in the green chapter 5 THE WAY WE LIVE)



Malaria is the biggest killer disease in Africa including Uganda. It is spread through the bite of the female mosquito at night both inside and outside the home.

## MALARIA



## Who is at risk?

It affects everybody but children under 5 years and pregnant women are more at risk of dying.

## What are the signs of Malaria?

- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Headache
- ◆ Joint pains
- ◆ Loss of appetite
- ◆ Feeling cold and shivering
- ◆ General weakness
- ◆ Sweating
- ◆ Vomiting



## How can malaria be prevented?

- ◆ Sleep under an insecticide treated bednet every night, especially pregnant women and children
- ◆ Pregnant women should take preventive medicine against malaria twice during pregnancy
- ◆ Clear all bushes around the home
- ◆ Get rid of still or stagnant water where mosquitos can breed
- ◆ Spray houses with insecticide



## What Is an Insecticide Treated Net (ITN)?

An insecticide treated net has been treated with insecticides to stop malaria mosquitoes from biting somebody using it. Some nets need to be retreated every 6 months and others do not. The packaging will explain what you need to do. Some nets are pre-treated and called long lasting insecticide treated nets (LLIN). These nets are very effective in reducing malaria infection and have been approved by Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization. For nets to work they must be tucked under the mattress so mosquitos cannot pass under the net.

They can be bought in most shops and supermarkets. In some areas where malaria is high health units give nets out free to children under 5 years and pregnant women.

## What is Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS)?



Indoor Residual Spraying is the spraying of the inside walls and ceilings of houses and buildings with safe and effective insecticides. IRS kills mosquitoes and is used to control malaria where there have been epidemics or where many people stay together, like in IDPs, schools, barracks or prisons.

## How is malaria treated?

Malaria is now treated using a combination of different drugs. This is because the old drugs no longer worked to treat malaria.





When trained VHTs can supervise the treatment of normal malaria. Any severe malaria must be referred to the health worker immediately for treatment.

- ◆ Treatment should be taken within 24 hours of the fever starting
- ◆ Always finish the full treatment, taking the right number of tablets at the right time on the right days
- ◆ Always give medicine by mouth unless the patient is vomiting when they should go immediately to a health unit

## 1<sup>ST</sup> LINE TREATMENT OF UNCOMPLICATED MALARIA: DOSAGE OF ACT TABLETS

Age	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
4 months – 3years	1 x 2 (12 hourly)	1 x 2 (12 hourly)	1 x 2 (12 hourly)
3 years – 7 years	2 x 2 (12 hourly)	2 x 2 (12 hourly)	2 x 2 (12 hourly)
7 years – 12 years	3 x 2 (12 hourly)	3 x 2 (12 hourly)	3 x 2 (12 hourly)
12 years and above	4 x 2 (12 hourly)	4 x 2 (12 hourly)	4 x 2 (12 hourly)

### How can VHT help?

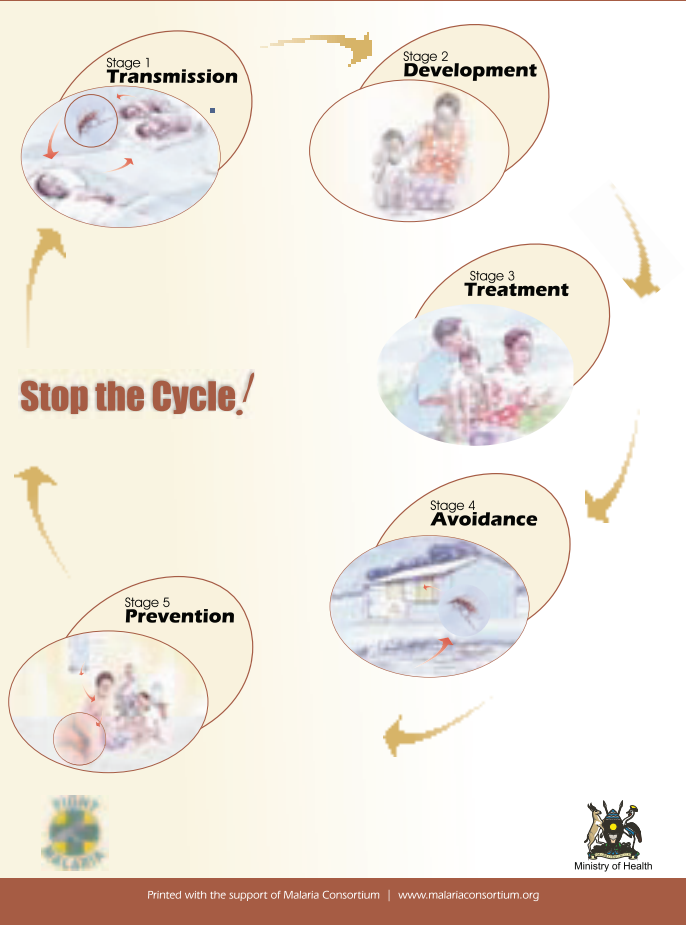
- ✓ Make sure all pregnant women go for preventive malaria treatment
- ✓ Show community members how to use a bed net and keep checking they are using it well
- ✓ Refer people with danger signs immediately and when treatment is not working to the nearest health unit
- ✓ Check and clear community compounds and areas in the village where mosquitos can breed
- ✓ Make sure mothers continue to breastfeed even when taking treatment
- ✓ Be a good example





1. Always sleep under an insecticide treated mosquito bed net
2. Pregnant women should take prevention medicine against malaria twice
3. Seek treatment immediately especially for children under 5
4. Always take the right dose for the right age at the right time

## The Malaria Transmission Cycle



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STDs are passed from an infected person to another through having sex without using a condom. The most common is HIV/AIDS which cannot be cured.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED  
DISEASES



## STDS AND INFECTIONS

STDS if not treated can lead to complications like infertility, higher risks in pregnancy and child birth. It is important to go for checking at a health centre to get the right treatment.

### What are the symptoms of STDs?

Usually a person with STDs may have discomfort in the private parts. Women do not often have signs but may have:

- ◆ Itching in the private parts
- ◆ Rashes, sores, blisters or warts on the private parts
- ◆ Pus or discharge from the private parts
- ◆ Pain while passing urine or during sex
- ◆ New babies may have pus in their eyes or skin rash

### How do you get STD's?

The most common way is by sex with an infected person.

Other ways are:

- ◆ Through infected blood
- ◆ From an infected mother to her new born baby
- ◆ Sharing sharp objects like razors, knives, syringes

### What is the difference between HIV/ AIDS and STDs?

- ◆ HIV is an STD.
- ◆ HIV has no cure, but some types of STDs can be treated if found early.
- ◆ A person suffering from STD (with discharge or ulcers) has a higher risk of contracting HIV.
- ◆ Many of the ways for preventing sexual transmission of HIV and STDs are the same.
- ◆ All people suffering from STDs are advised to go for early medical check up and treatment to reduce the chances of getting the HIV virus.

### What is HIV?

HIV stands for Human Immuno Deficiency Virus. It is a virus. A virus is a tiny germ that lives inside the body. It is so small that it cannot be seen by the eye.

<b>H HUMAN</b>	The virus infects human beings
<b>I IMMUNO DEFICIENCY</b>	The body becomes weak and unable to fight off infections and disease
<b>V VIRUS</b>	A type of germ

When someone has the virus they are said to be HIV positive. HIV is the virus that causes the disease AIDS.



## What is AIDS?

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. AIDS is the stage when the body's defence system has become so weak from the virus, that the person becomes sick.

<b>A</b>	<b>ACQUIRED</b>	to get / have
<b>I</b>	<b>IMMUNE</b>	protected / protection
<b>D</b>	<b>DEFICIENCY</b>	lack of
<b>S</b>	<b>SYNDROME</b>	many signs and symptoms seen together or one at a time When the immune system can no longer protect the body against HIV then the disease becomes AIDS.

## How does a person get HIV infection?

A person gets HIV if they have contact with blood, semen or vaginal fluids of someone who already has HIV. This lets the HIV germs (virus) get into the other person's body.

This can happen in 4 ways:

- 1 - by unprotected sex with somebody who has HIV
- 2 - body fluids from an infected person entering one's body
- 3 - sharing a sharp object which has not been sterilized first
- 4 - by an infected woman passing it to her baby during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding

## How can someone know if they have HIV?

The first step is to go for is HIV Counseling and Testing (HCT). HCT services are available at a most health centers. A small amount of blood is taken off and checked for the virus. It is important for sexual partner(s) to tell each other if they are HIV positive so the other partner(s) can get tested. Sometimes only one partner will test positive for HIV while the other tests negative (discordance). It is better to test together to know this.

## Why is it important to test for HIV?

Once a person knows their status they can:

- ◆ Prevent infection
- ◆ Prevent infecting their partner(s)
- ◆ Live positively
- ◆ Get treatment for other infections such as TB
- ◆ Get treatment to help live longer with HIV AIDS For pregnant women who are HIV positive to prevent their unborn babies from getting HIV







## How can HIV infection be prevented?

- ◆ Go with your partner for HIV testing so you can know together if you have HIV
- ◆ Practice ABC (abstain, be faithful, use condoms)
- ◆ Have one sexual partner and be faithful to each other
- ◆ Get all STDs treated to reduce the risk of getting HIV as well
- ◆ Avoid risky behaviours like having many sexual partners, taking alcohol
- ◆ Do not share needles, razors or syringes with other people
- ◆ Go for ANC if you are pregnant and deliver in a health unit
- ◆ Avoid cultural practices like circumcision, tattooing when instruments are shared

## How is HIV managed?

If a person tests for HIV and is found positive they should:

- ◆ take septrin (cotrimoxazole) every day
- ◆ check for other infections like TB, meningitis
- ◆ go to the health unit often for check ups
- ◆ have a CD4 count



## Can HIV be treated?

- ◆ Anti-retroviral (ARVs) are medicines that treat AIDS. ARVs help to keep the HIV virus from growing in the body, but ARVs do not cure AIDS.
- ◆ ARVs are for people with AIDS whose immune system is weak. Not everyone with HIV needs to take ARVs.
- ◆ People start to take ARVs when their immune system is weak. Health workers will decide when ARVs should be started.



## What treatment is for HIV?

- ◆ Anti Retroviral Therapy is a health package which includes anti-retroviral medicines and lifestyle practices to support HIV patients to manage the virus in their body and prevent other infections.
- ◆ A health provider will decide when a patient needs to start and they will be counseled and a personal treatment program agreed. This will depend on their immune system (body defense system) and their general health and will involve some tests.
- ◆ All positive children should be given ARV treatment

## What are the benefits of taking ARVs ?

- ◆ ARVs can help a person live longer
- ◆ ARVs can help a person to live a healthier life
- ◆ ARVs can reduce the amount of money a person needs to spend on health care for things like treatment of opportunistic infections



## How can VHT help?

- ✓ Correct any myths about how people get HIV, especially not by casual touch or sharing plates and cups
- ✓ By encouraging people to go for HIV testing and counseling
- ✓ Making sure pregnant women who are HIV positive go for PMTCT and deliver in a health unit
- ✓ Support HIV patients to take their ARVs
- ✓ Encourage people to use condoms to protect themselves when having sex
- ✓ Encourage men not to have many sexual partners



## DISCLOSURE

Disclosure means when somebody tells other people about their HIV status, whether they are positive or negative. Counselors are specially trained how to talk to HIV positive patients about how to do this. Refer people in your community to a trained person who can advise. If they trust you and tell you their status make sure you do not tell anybody else without their agreement.

### Why do people not tell others about their HIV status?

- ◆ Fear of blame
- ◆ Shame on their family
- ◆ People gossiping about them
- ◆ Being attacked
- ◆ Not to be shunned or left alone

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ When talking about HIV in the community always encourage people to go for HIV Counseling and Testing
- ✓ Take people to testing centres
- ✓ Mobilize community members for outreach VCT services
- ✓ Distribute condoms to those in need
- ✓ Get couples to tell each other their HIV status to prevent re-infection
- ✓ Educate people about violence especially when a couple is discordant
- ✓ Encourage men to stop rape and defilement



**VHTs need special training to know how to counsel people with HIV**



VHT has a very important part to play in reducing stigma. HIV stigma means treating people differently because of HIV. Stigma is a very big problem and does not help people to live normal lives. With ART people with AIDS are able to live normal and longer but some people still treat them badly.

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ By correcting myths about HIV/AIDS
- ✓ Informing people how they can get HIV
- ✓ Encouraging people to go for HIV testing (especially pregnant women and caregivers taking children for testing)
- ✓ Getting relatives to support HIV positive people to take their medicines
- ✓ Organizing support groups for HIV positive people and their families
- ✓ Warning adolescents of the dangers of practicing unsafe sex
- ✓ Supplying condoms to those in need
- ✓ Reminding communities that people with HIV do not choose to have it



- 1. Test for HIV with your partner to know your status.**
- 2. Prevent STDs by being faithful and use a condom when you have sex.**
- 3. Pregnant women must test for HIV and if positive go for PMTCT.**
- 4 Children born to HIV positive mothers should be tested at 6 weeks old**

*VHT must refer people who they think are HIV positive for counselling and support from a trained health provider*





This is care provided at home to people living with HIV/AIDS. This is to reduce on over crowding in the health facilities and also to allow the care givers time to do other tasks at home as they look after the patient. Only VHTs who have been given special training will be asked to do this.

### What can VHT do?

If there are people living with HIV in the community the VHT member should:

- ◆ Visit patients at home
- ◆ Encourage the patient to take their medicines as directed by the health workers and to fill in an adherence calendar
- ◆ Make sure the person is eating a balanced diet
- ◆ Find out if the patient gets regular exercise and rests enough
- ◆ Check on any other illnesses and make sure the patient reports these to the health worker if they cannot be managed at home

### What must be done at home or in hospital?

- ◆ Wear rubber or plastic gloves while looking after an HIV/AIDS patient to avoid touching blood, open sores or wounds, bloody stools or vomit with your bare hands
- ◆ Wash your hands with soap and clean water when looking after an HIV/AIDS patient (and for any patient)
- ◆ Always wear gloves when touching dirty or bloody clothes, beddings and towels
- ◆ Wash soiled or bloody clothes, beddings and towels in hot soapy water or water and add some bleach (JIK)
- ◆ All materials used for nursing an HIV/AIDS or any other infectious disease such as Ebola should be disinfected in JIK, and then burnt or thrown into a pit latrine

### How can VHT help to link to the health worker?

The VHT can support an HIV positive community member by being a link between the health provider and patient in many ways:

- ✓ Checking the patient is following their drug regime correctly
- ✓ Reminding the patient when to go for more drugs and follow up
- ✓ Supporting the patient with lifestyle changes to keep healthy
- ✓ Referring the patient when other sicknesses come
- ✓ Giving emotional support and care





# DISEASES

TB can be easily caught by other family members. It is a serious infection of the lungs which causes severe coughing but can be fully cured with medication. It kills many adults and children in Uganda.

## TUBERCULOSIS (TB)



## How does someone get TB?

Tuberculosis is passed on from one person to another very easily. When a person suffering from tuberculosis coughs they spread the TB germs in the air. If people around them breathe in the air, they can get the disease if their bodies are not able to fight the germs. It attacks the lungs but other parts of the body may be affected.

## What are the signs of TB?

- ◆ Coughing all the time for more than two weeks
- ◆ Coughing out sputum (mucus from the lungs and sometimes with blood)
- ◆ Chest pain
- ◆ Difficulty in breathing sometimes
- ◆ Getting thinner and thinner over time
- ◆ Evening fevers
- ◆ Sweating at night
- ◆ Poor appetite

## What should someone with signs of TB do?

- ◆ Go to the nearest health centre for examination and proper advice.
- ◆ Have a sputum test done to confirm TB
- ◆ Refer people near to TB patients for screening, especially children under 5 years
- ◆ Continue to take all medicines given by the health worker until told that the TB is cured



## How can TB be prevented?

- ◆ As soon as a person shows signs of TB, refer immediately to the health worker for examination and treatment, this takes 6-8 months.
- ◆ Cure is the best way of preventing the disease from spreading and gets rid of the source of infection.
- ◆ All children must be given BCG vaccination at birth or soon after to prevent the severe forms of TB.
- ◆ Wash hands after coughing and don't spit to infect others



## How can TB be controlled?

- ◆ Always cover the mouth when coughing
- ◆ Do not spit or if you have to spit only in a container with a cover and throw into a latrine.
- ◆ Eat plenty of good food
- ◆ Live in well ventilated and lit houses to get fresh air and light
- ◆ Boil milk before drinking it



## What should people in close contact with a TB patient do?

People like family, caretakers or workmates who are in close contact with TB patients (especially patients not on treatment) are at risk of getting the germ and contracting the disease.

- ♦ See a health worker for proper examination and advice.
- ♦ Take care of the patient suffering from TB and make sure that they take medicine as advised by the health workers.



## If TB is not treated, what happens?

- ♦ The person will continue being sick and may die
- ♦ Germs will infect those people who are nearby
- ♦ If the treatment, is not completed new medicines may stop working as the germs get too strong and the TB will not be cured



- 1. TB can be cured.**
- 2. Early treatment is as important as completion of treatment.**
- 3. Do not spit or cough with mouth uncovered and always wash hands after coughing**





This is a way of controlling and treating TB. It is Direct Observed Therapy Short course (DOTS).



- ▶ Treatment Supporter often a community volunteer, VHT or family member watch the TB treatment being taken every day until they are cured.
- ▶ A VHT or health worker can find a Treatment Supporter for the TB patient who will help them.

### How can VHT help with TB?

- ✓ Know the signs and refer people to the health worker for treatment.
- ✓ Send people with cough for more than 2 weeks to go for TB screening which is free at MOH clinics
- ✓ When trained do DOTS for TB patients
- ✓ Make sure all children are immunized against TB at birth or soon afterwards
- ✓ Encourage TB patients to have a good nutrition all the time to boost their immune status and for a quick recovery
- ✓ Tell the community that TB can be cured
- ✓ Get people to go for voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) for HIV/AIDS
- ✓ Tell people that TB drugs work well even if you have HIV



**Be a Treatment Supporter to encourage TB patients with their treatment.**





# DISEASES

*These diseases are most common in children and can often be prevented by immunization. These diseases cause disability, like brain damage and lameness and sometimes death.*

## PREVENTABLE DISEASES



## How can VHT help?

Making sure all children in your village are fully vaccinated.

- ✓ Reporting all diseases in your village to the nearest health unit
- ✓ Helping with immunization (See section on Child health - IMMUNIZATION in orange Chapter 4 Family Well Being for more information).

## DIARRHOEA

Diarrhoea is passing of loose or watery stools, at least 3 times within 24 hours. Mothers and other caregivers usually know when their children have diarrhoea. Diarrhoea with dehydration (means the body does not have enough fluid) is a major cause of childhood deaths.

### What can happen?

When a child has diarrhoea many times this leads to malnutrition (see green Chapter 5 The Way We Live for more information on MALNUTRITION).

### How can diarrhoea be prevented?

Diarrhoea diseases can be prevented by good hygiene habits:



- ▶ WASH HANDS
  - ▶ DISPOSE FAECES CORRECTLY
  - ▶ DRINK AND KEEP CLEAN WATER
  - ▶ FOOD MUST BE EATEN HOT AND LEFTOVERS COVERED
- (See more in Green Chapter: The Way we live - SANITATION)

### What must be one when feeding children?

Mothers/ caretakers should:

- ▶ Always wash hands with soap before and after:
  - 1 preparing food
  - 2 feeding children
  - 3 going to toilet or cleaning baby
- ▶ Breast feed babies for first 2 years to prevent diseases

### How can diarrhea be treated at home?

If the child has normal diarrhoea and no danger sign, the family can treat at home with ORS solution and zinc supplement. VHTs will be trained to show families how to do this.



## When should a child not be treated at home?

If there is any blood in the stool refer the child immediately to the nearest health facility for urgent treatment as this is a danger sign.

## How can VHT help?

- ✓ By showing people how to make and give ORS
  - ✓ Referring sick children to the health unit for treatment
  - ✓ Reporting cases to prevent an outbreak
  - ✓ Teaching good hygiene habits
  - ✓ Recording which families have pit latrines in the Village Register
- Showing a good example

### Tip: for VHT

Remember the 4 Fs

- ✓ Fingers      Keep clean
- ✓ Faeces      Keep in the pit latrine
- ✓ Flies        Keep away
- ✓ Food        Keep covered



- 1. Show families how and explain when to always wash hands**
- 2. Help families to make ORS**
- 3. Take any child with danger sign to health centre**

*Any child with diarrhoea and blood in stool or diaharroea for more than 14 days must go immediately for treatment at a health unit*



# MEASLES

Measles is a serious disease which can kill. It attacks mostly children, even young adults, who are not immunized.

## How does a child get measles?

A child who is not immunized can catch measles from an infected child.

## What are the main signs of measles?

A child with measles will have some of the following signs:

- ❖ A general body rash
- ❖ Fever
- ❖ Red eyes with pus
- ❖ Running nose
- ❖ Breathing problems

## How can measles be prevented?

- ❖ All children to be immunized against measles at the age of 9 months
- ❖ Children will be given extra doses of vaccination during National Immunization Days (NIDS) and if there is an outbreak/epidemic
- ❖ Breastfeeding exclusively (means only breastfeed) for the first 6 months protect against measles
- ❖ Feed children nutritious foods to build up their body defense system
- ❖ Provide vitamin A supplement every 6 months to all children aged 6 months to 5 years



## If a child has measles what must be done?

- ❖ Report cases to the health worker to prevent outbreaks
- ❖ Take the child to the health unit or hospital for proper treatment immediately.
- ❖ The child should receive vitamin A supplement and continue to eat and drink.

## What can happen to a child if measles is not treated?

- ❖ The child gets malnourished
- ❖ Breathing difficulties (pneumonia)
- ❖ Child may die



- 
- 1. Immunize all children against measles.**
  - 2. Help take infected children immediately to the nearest health unit for proper treatment.**



## MENINGITIS



This is a serious bacterial infection which can kill if not treated quickly. It involves an infection which can attack the brain cells and can be easily caught by people with TB and HIV and children who have not been immunized.

### What are the signs of meningitis?

- ❖ Serious headache and vomiting
- ❖ Stiff neck
- ❖ Very sleepy or unconscious
- ❖ Confused
- ❖ Purple rash
- ❖ Head injury

Sometimes there are outbreaks of meningitis in an area and many people can be affected. If there is more than one case the District Health Team will need to get involved and carry out an immunization campaign.

### What can be done to prevent meningitis?



- ❖ Make sure all children are immunized and given boosters when there is an outbreak
- ❖ Report cases to the health authorities

### How is meningitis treated?

This is always done in hospital by giving strong antibiotics and watching the patient closely.

### What will happen if meningitis is not treated?



- ❖ The child may die
- ❖ The child or person can have a serious disability like loss of hearing, fits or brain damage
- ❖ The infection will spread to other family members and neighbours or schools and become an outbreak which is very serious

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ By referring possible cases to trained health providers immediately
- ✓ Informing the district health team so they can prevent an outbreak
- ✓ Confirming if the patient with meningitis has been in school to make sure the teachers and district are aware so they can check the other students



- 1. Make sure children are immunized**
- 2. Refer immediately for treatment**





Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs and can be very severe. A very bad cough or cold is when moisture drips from the nose down the back of the throat. In our communities, bacteria are usually the cause of pneumonia. this is seen by looking for chest indrawing sucking in of the stomach when breathing. VHTs will be specially trained to look for these danger signs. As part of as part of training on how to take care of sick children at home VHTs will learn to look for in-drawing in all sick children and report this danger sign.

## How can severe pneumonia be seen?

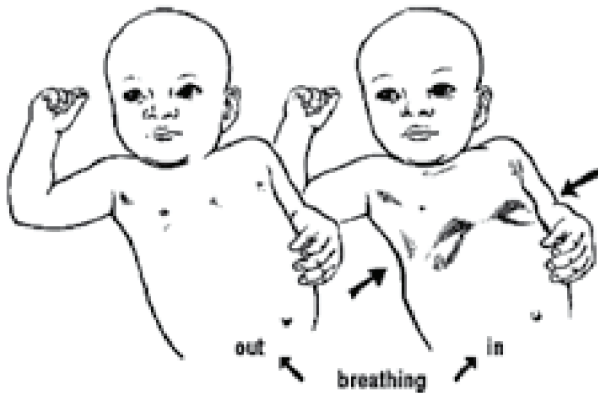
Children with severe pneumonia cannot be treated well at home. They must be referred to a health facility.

- ❖ By fast breathing
- ❖ Chest in drawing
- ❖ Fever

## How can chest indrawing be seen?

To look for chest indrawing, the child must be calm. The child should not be breastfeeding. If the child is asleep, try not to waken the child.

The chest below the ribs sucks in instead of filling with air. In the picture below, the child on the right below has chest indrawing. See the lines on the chest as the child on the right breathes in. The child has chest indrawing if the lower chest wall goes IN when the child breathes IN.



For chest indrawing to be present, it must be clearly seen and present at every breath.



If you see chest indrawing only when the child is crying or feeding, the child does not have chest indrawing. If you are unsure whether the child has chest indrawing, look again. If other community health workers are available, ask what they see.

### How is fast breathing seen?

To look for fast breathing, count the child's breaths for one full minute. Count the breaths of all children with cough or cold. See the table to check for the rate for their age. The child must be quiet and calm when you count breaths. If the child is frightened, crying, angry, or moving around, you will not be able to do an accurate count. A child with fast breathing has Pneumonia.

AGE	BREATHS PER MINUTE
2-12 months	more than 50
1-5 years	more than 40



- 1. Make sure children are immunized**
- 2. Refer immediately for treatment**

## POLIO

Polio is a dangerous and crippling disease caused by a virus. It is visible by crippling of the legs and arms. It happens mostly in children of less than 5 years.

### How does a child get polio?

A child gets polio through taking food or water contaminated with faeces of an infected person with wild polio virus.

### What are the signs of a child who has polio?

- ◆ Mild cold
- ◆ High body temperature (fever)
- ◆ Sudden weakness or paralysis of parts of the body, especially legs and arms
- ◆ Vomiting
- ◆ Passing of loose or watery stool frequently
- ◆ Sore throat
- ◆ Abdominal pain
- ◆ Muscle pain





## What should be done to prevent a child from getting polio?

- ◆ Have all children fully immunized against polio at birth, 6, 10 and 14 weeks).
- ◆ Make sure that all children below 5 years are immunized when there is a special polio eradication campaign called (National or Sub National Immunization Days NIDS).
- ◆ Keep food and drinking water in clean containers to avoid disease.
- ◆ Keep the compound clean, and dispose off all faeces including children's in a latrine.
- ◆ Wash your hands with soap and water after using a latrine and before handling food.

## What should you do if your child shows signs of polio?

- ◆ Take the child to the health worker immediately for proper advice and treatment.
- ◆ Any child with paralysis (sudden floppy limb) should be reported to the health worker immediately.

## Can polio be cured?

Polio has no cure which is why it must be prevented by immunization. However, children who have been affected by polio can be helped to lead a normal life, despite being disabled.




## What help can be given to children who had polio?

Take the child to a rehabilitation centre. There a trained health worker can advise how to help the child lead a normal life. You can help a child who has been paralyzed by:

- ◆ Positioning the child's back, legs and arms properly when the child sits or lies down
- ◆ Moving the child's legs and arms at different times every day
- ◆ Teaching the child to do the activities that other children do
- ◆ Providing special equipment, such as braces or crutches, if needed for the child to stand and walk.

## How can VHT help?

- ✓ Reporting all cases of polio to the health worker
- ✓ Help take children with signs for treatment
- ✓ Make sure all in the village are vaccinated

- 
- 1. Immunise all children.**
  - 2. Support children with polio and refer to organizations that can help.**



Tetanus is a disease caused by germs which enter the body through a wound. It causes severe pain and stiffness, starting from the jaw and spreading to the whole body. It affects both new born babies and adults.

## What are the signs of someone with tetanus?

- ◆ Pain and stiffness in the whole body especially when touched.
- ◆ Difficulty in opening the mouth wide.
- ◆ Babies cannot breastfeed and they cry continuously.
- ◆ Pain spreads to other parts of the body.
- ◆ Sudden tightening of the whole body several times, while awake and in great pain.

## How does a newborn baby get Tetanus?

- ◆ If delivered in a dirty environment
- ◆ The umbilical cord has been cut with an instrument which Has not been sterilized or boiled and kept clean
- ◆ The umbilical cord is tied with a dirty string/thread
- ◆ The umbilical cord is smeared with animal dung, ash, lizard droppings.

## How do children and adults get tetanus?

When the germ enters the body through:

- ◆ Deep cuts or wounds
- ◆ Wounds caused by nails, thorns and other unclean sharp objects
- ◆ Injuries caused by barbed wire
- ◆ Animal bite wounds

## How can babies be prevented from getting tetanus?



- ◆ Clean and sterilize all instruments used to cut cord.
- ◆ Keep the umbilical cord clean after birth until it falls off.
- ◆ Do not apply animal dung, ash, soil or lizard droppings on umbilical cord.
- ◆ Ensure that your baby gets the tetanus vaccine (one every four weeks at 6, 10 and 14 weeks).

## How can tetanus be prevented among children and adults?



- ◆ Clean all wounds and have them treated promptly.
- ◆ Pregnant women must be vaccinated against tetanus to protect themselves and their unborn babies against tetanus.
- ◆ Women of child bearing age between 13-49 years should be vaccinated against tetanus to protect themselves and their future babies from tetanus.





### How is tetanus treated?

- ◆ The patient goes for a series of injections
- ◆ The wound or infection must be properly cleaned and covered

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Tetanus is a killer disease but can be prevented by immunization.
- ✓ All new born babies must be immunized at 6, 10 and 14 weeks of age.
- ✓ Ensure that woman of child bearing age (13-49 years) finish the 5 doses of tetanus vaccination to protect herself and the unborn baby.



**Vaccinate all children and pregnant women against tetanus**

## WORMS

There are different types of intestinal worms like roundworms, whipworms and hookworms. They cause weakness in children and can slow their growth and development.

When an infected person defecates outside, the eggs of the worms are left in the soil. The eggs stick to food, hands and vegetables. If a person eats such food without washing them, or eats before washing hands, then they become infected.

Hookworms are different. The eggs hatch and develop into tiny worms which can go inside the skin - usually between a person's toes when they walk barefooted.

### Who is at risk?

Everybody who lives in an area where there is poor sanitation. Children under-five years of age, school children and women are most at risk.

### What are the signs?

- ◆ A painful and swollen stomach.

### What happens when they are not treated?

- ◆ Children grow less well; they are weaker, shorter and get tired and weak due to blood loss (anaemia). This affects their school work.
- ◆ Pregnant women who are infected can give birth to weak babies





### What can be done to treat worms?

Everyone in an affected area should take the drug (ALBENDAZOLE or MEBENDAZOLE). This can be got from your nearest health unit during Mass Drug Administration.



- 1. Always use a latrine, wash hands and food before eating and wear shoes**
- 2. Take children to child health days every 6 months**





# DISEASES

These diseases are very common in rural communities but can be easily prevented, controlled or treated when people know about them. They cause discomfort and people cannot carry out their normal duties due to sickness.

## TROPICAL DISEASES



In some areas VHTs may be given special training to help with these diseases.

- ✓ Always refer to a health worker if you have not been trained
- ✓ Treat at home if you have been trained
- ✓ Report all cases to prevent outbreaks
- ✓ Refer to SANITATION in green chapter 5 The Way We Live for prevention at home and in the community.

## BILHARZIA

It is caught by being in infected water - for example, when rice farming, swimming, fishing or washing in the infested water.

- ◆ It is spread when people with the disease urinate or defecate in or near a local water source. This water becomes infected with young worms that enter the skin when people get in the water.
- ◆ If the disease is not treated, it can lead to damage of the liver or bladder and eventually death.

### Who is at risk?

Everybody who lives and uses snail infested water source is at risk. Children who spend many hours playing and swimming, women who spend much of their time washing, people who bathe in the water (swamps and dirty water) and fishermen are at greatest risk.

### What are the signs?

- ◆ A painful and swollen stomach
- ◆ Blood in the faeces or urine
- ◆ Slow loss of body weight
- ◆ Tiredness and weakness due to blood loss leading to anaemia

### How can it be treated?

Everyone who lives in an infested area should take the drug (PRAZIQUANTEL). This can be got from your nearest health unit or during Mass Drug Administration.

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Teach people good home hygiene habits
- ✓ Make sure all community water sources are protected
- ✓ Report cases to the health worker
- ✓ Get the community to attend Community Drug distribution days



**Use latrines to improve hygiene and protect water sources**



# ELEPHANTITIS

Tiny worms block drainage and cause pain and big swellings in the limbs and private parts of infected persons.

- ◆ It is spread by mosquitoes that bite infected persons and pick up the tiny worms. When the mosquitoes then bite a new person the worms enter the body. The worms develop inside the body and produce more worms that cause problems in the lymph vessels that lead to the swelling.

## Who is at risk?

Everybody who lives in an area with the worms. Some infected people may have no signs yet their body is being damaged every day and they are infecting others.

## What are the signs?

- ◆ Feel extreme pain in the body - especially in the swollen arms, legs and scrotal area.
- ◆ The swelling of the private parts can mean it is difficult and sometimes impossible to perform sexually. This puts pressure on and even breaks people's marriages.
- ◆ Disfigurement, disability, body weakness.

## How can they be prevented?



- ◆ Sleeping under a mosquito net every night
- ◆ Taking medicine to kill the worms

## What treatment is given?



- ◆ Everyone who lives in an infected area should take the drugs (IVERMECTIN and ALBENDAZOLE). These are given by during Mass Drug Administration.

## How can VHT help?

- ✓ Encourage people to sleep under mosquito nets
- ✓ Take prevention medicine when there is an infection in the area
- ✓ Report cases to the health worker
- ✓ Get the community to attend Community Drug distribution days



**Sleep under an insecticide treated mosquito nets and take medication if you live in an infested area**



## RIVER BLINDNESS

River blindness is common near rivers and can cause blindness. It is spread from one person to another through the bites of black flies which breed in fast flowing rivers and streams. It makes affected communities very poor.

### Who is at risk?

People who live near rivers where the flies breed. Even healthy looking people may have the disease if they live in areas where the flies breed.

### What are the signs?

- ◆ Severe skin itching.
- ◆ Skin disease.
- ◆ Cannot see properly and sometimes total blindness.
- ◆ People are unable to work easily.
- ◆ Children lose focus in class and cannot sleep well because of troublesome itching.

### What treatment is given?

Everyone who lives in an infected area should take the drug (IVERMECTIN) which is available during Mass Drug Administration.



### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Report where flies may be so spraying can be organised
- ✓ Take prevention medicine when there is an infection in the area
- ✓ Report cases to the health worker
- ✓ Get the community to attend Community Drug distribution days



- 1. Check your area to see if the black flies are present.**
- 2. Take medicines until the area can be sprayed to clear the flies.**





## SLEEPING SICKNESS

This is an infectious disease which multiplies in the body and gets into the central nervous system and destroys the brain cells.

- ◆ People can die if not treated.
- ◆ It is got from the bite of an infected tsetse fly.
- ◆ An infected mother can pass it to her unborn baby during pregnancy.
- ◆ Contaminated blood or needles and syringes can pass it to others.

### Who is at risk?

People who herd cattle and areas where tsetse flies are a problem.

### What are the signs?

These can take from 3 weeks to 3 months to show:

- ◆ Irregular fever: shivering and sweating
- ◆ Headaches
- ◆ Joint pains
- ◆ General body itching
- ◆ Swelling of lymph nodes in neck
- ◆ Swelling of eyelids and face

Later signs are more extreme:

- ◆ Mental confusion
- ◆ Abnormal behaviour
- ◆ Changed sleep patterns (in day and restless at night)
- ◆ Weight loss

### How can it be controlled?



- ◆ Control of tsetse fly
- ◆ Treating the sick cattle

### How is it treated?



A blood test which is free of charge is the only way to know if a person has sleeping sickness. If medicine is given early it can be cured.

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Report cases to the health worker
- ✓ Help people to go for testing and treatment
- ✓ Spray the area to get rid of the flies





- 1 Sleeping sickness can be treated if early.**
- 2 Have a blood test if signs are visible.**

## TRACHOMA

This is a serious disease which causes swelling and damage to the eye. Trachoma leads to blindness if not treated.

- ◆ It is spread from child to child by dirty fingers, towels, clothes and a particular type of flies known as eye seeking flies.
- ◆ From children the infection is spread to adults.

### Who is at risk?

Everybody is at risk, especially children and mothers since they spend more time together.

### What are the signs?

- ◆ Both eyes become red
- ◆ Pus
- ◆ Eyes feel like dirt is inside
- ◆ Itching
- ◆ Pain and poor vision

### How can it be prevented?



- ◆ Improve your personal hygiene.
- ◆ Use soap and clean water for face washing.
- ◆ Household rubbish should be properly disposed.
- ◆ Don't share houses with animals.
- ◆ Use pit latrines for human waste.

### What should be done?

- ◆ If you suspect trachoma go for early treatment at the nearest health unit.
- ◆ Take medicines during Mass Drug Administration.

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Teach people good hygiene habits
- ✓ Note in your register homes without pit latrines
- ✓ Report cases to the health worker
- ✓ Help people with signs to go for early treatment at the nearest health unit



- ✓ Take prevention medicine when there is an infection in the area



**Keep eyes clean and dig a pit for rubbish far from the home to keep flies away**





This is about sexual relations and having children. It involves taking and using family planning methods to prevent pregnancies and space children. It covers pregnancy, birth and care of both the new born child and mother. It also looks at adolescent development and sexuality.



Child spacing is easy. There are various methods you and your partner can use to avoid pregnancy. Some of them can be practiced by women and some by men. Some of the methods are effective for a short time, while some can last longer or even have a permanent effect.

### What is FP?

Family Planning is when an individual or couple decides:

- ✓ when to have children
  - ✓ the number of children to have
  - ✓ the space (time period) in between the children
- by using a contraceptive of their choice to do this.

### What are the benefits of child spacing using family planning?

Child spacing promotes the health of the mother, father, children and the community.

#### The mother

- ◆ It gives her enough time to recover fully from previous pregnancy and child birth
- ◆ It gives time to look after the child properly and helps her to bond with her child
- ◆ It gives her chance to do other things to develop herself and family
- ◆ Some Family Planning methods help prevent certain cancers and condoms help to prevent sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS
- ◆ It gives time to grow enough food for the family
- ◆ It allows her time to breastfeed her baby fully
- ◆ It avoids high risk pregnancies and abortions or miscarriages
- ◆ waits until body is fully mature for giving birth and prevents death in pregnancy for teenage girls

#### The father

- ◆ It means there is more money for each family member
- ◆ It improves the quality of life
- ◆ It reduces worry and overwork

#### The child

- ◆ There is full enjoyment of love from both parents
- ◆ There is normal physical and emotional development of children
- ◆ There are adequate resources for school fees and medical care and shelter for the children.



## The community

- ◆ It improves the social and economic standards in society by reducing on so many people competing for resources and services like food, trees for fuel, land, schools and health services

## What are the different Family Planning Methods?

There are two types of family planning (FP) methods. These are the modern (artificial) and the natural methods.

## FAMILY PLANNING METHODS

### How do these different family planning methods work?

**SHORT ACTING METHODS** - These can work from one round of sex up to 3 months



#### CONDOMS

Condoms are probably the best known kind of family planning. They are widely available and easy to use. They are a non-permanent form of family planning, which means it is still easy to have a planned pregnancy at a later date. Note: Condoms are the **ONLY** method of family planning which also prevents HIV and AIDS. There is also a female condom.



#### PILLS

Pills are tablets containing hormones. A woman takes one tablet at the same time every day to prevent pregnancy. If she stops the pills, she can soon become pregnant.



#### EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

It is taken only in an emergency, (e.g. condom has broken or slipped off) or if sex took place against a woman's will or otherwise unprotected and she wants to avoid pregnancy.



#### INJECTABLES

It is possible to have an injection of hormones similar to medicine in a pill. An injection is given every three months into the woman's arm or buttocks. It prevents pregnancy for up to three months. When the woman stops taking injections she can get pregnant again.



### (LAM) BREAST FEEDING

This method is called "LAM". As long as a woman is breast feeding a newly born child, and has not begun menstruating, she will not be able to become pregnant for up to six months. She can have sex during this time without the risk of pregnancy, as long as she gives her baby only breast milk, and has not started menstruating.



### MOONBEADS

The fertile days of the woman's cycle can be counted using moonbeads, so you only have sex on the "safe" days. The woman's menstruation needs to be regular and the instructions must be followed carefully. The man and woman must cooperate for this to work properly.



LONG ACTING METHODS - These can work from 3 - 5 years

### THE COIL (IUD)

The coil is a small plastic with copper device that is inserted into the woman's womb to prevent pregnancy. The coil prevents sperm joining with the eggs. It protects the woman from pregnancy for up to twelve years. If you want another child, the coil can be removed and the woman can become pregnant again immediately.



### IMPLANTS

Implants are very small plastic sticks containing medicine like pills and Injectables. They are placed under the skin of a woman's upper arm and medicine passes slowly into the system. This stops the woman from releasing eggs. Implants can prevent pregnancy for three to five years.



PERMANENT METHODS - These mean the person can no longer have children.

### VASECTOMY

A vasectomy is a simple operation which ties and cuts the tubes that carry a man's semen. It only takes a few minutes, but it is a permanent form of family planning. After a vasectomy, the man will still have the same sexual urge, but sperm will no longer mix with semen when he ejaculates. He can no longer make a woman pregnant, but he will continue to have orgasms normally.





## TUBAL LIGATION

Tubal ligation is a simple operation to tie and cut the woman's tubes so that the sperm cannot meet the egg. The woman can never become pregnant again.



- 1 Using a FP method is safe and the best way to space a family**
- 2 Get advice from your health provider on the best method for you and your partner.**
- 3 If you have concerns, myths or side effects got to the health worker**

## MEN AND FAMILY PLANNING

It is important to involve men in leading others to plan their families so they can manage to provide for them. This will help other men as they follow his example.

### Why should men be involved?

- ◆ A man is expected to care for his family's health and well being. Family Planning helps to do this.
- ◆ Having a smaller family doesn't make a man less of a man, In fact it makes him more of a man as he can provide enough for his family.

### Where can men go for services?

FP services are found in most health centres where there is a rainbow over the yellow flower sign.

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Providing FP methods in the community if trained (eg condoms, pills, injectables)
- ✓ By encouraging men to talk with their partners about FP
- ✓ Taking men to FP providers for advice and services
- ✓ Telling them how condoms can prevent HIV



**Men should plan with their partners a small, manageable family for a better life.**





## POPULATION

Uganda has a fast growing population which is putting pressure on the country in many ways.

### What does a big population mean?

- ◆ More food is needed
- ◆ Less land is there for growing food as people need more places to live and work
- ◆ The environment is destroyed by cutting trees for firewood and building
- ◆ There is not enough clean water for everyone
- ◆ Sanitation becomes a problem with overcrowding of people
- ◆ The government does not have enough money to give services
- ◆ Poverty gets worse

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Tell community members that their having big families makes the population of Uganda grow faster than available resources
- ✓ Let people know they can make a difference
- ✓ Encourage men and women to have families they can manage
- ✓ Get couples to use family planning methods which are best for them
- ✓ Refer people for FP services
- ✓ Give information and FP supplies (if trained)



**Be responsible and lead others by planning a small family so we can leave our country for our children or grandchildren.**





*This is when a couple decides to have a child. Normally pregnancy takes 9 months. It is a time when the woman and her partner must take care to protect both the mother and unborn baby. The delivery should be planned with their health provider to prepare for the safe arrival of their baby.*



### What are the steps of having a baby?

- 1 Plan together when to have your baby
- 2 Care of the woman during pregnancy
- 3 Give birth in a clean, safe place
- 4 Care for the mother and new born baby after delivery

## PLANNING TO HAVE A BABY

This is very important to give enough time and make sure you can save the money needed for the delivery and caring for the mother and baby. If a woman is HIV positive she should get advice from her health worker to know if she is well enough to have a baby.

### What services can be used before having a baby?

When individuals and couples plan to have a baby they can get the following services:

- ❖ Family Planning, not too young, not too old, not too many children
- ❖ Immunization against tetanus
- ❖ Screening for HIV and STDs
- ❖ PMTCT for HIV positive women
- ❖ Checking for diseases like diabetes, hypertension or sickle cell

### Tip: for planning a baby

Think about and answer these questions with your partner

- ✓ When will the baby be born (date)?
- ✓ Where will I deliver the baby(place)?
- ✓ How will I get there (transport)?
- ✓ Who will help deliver the baby (midwife)?

**Plan when and agree with your partner to go to a health unit**



## PREGNANCY

This takes 9 months during which time a woman should take extra care of herself and her unborn baby with her partner supporting her. She should go to a nearby health unit for ante-natal care (ANC) services at least 4 times to be checked.

### When she finds she is pregnant what should she do?

Go to the nearest health unit as soon as she misses 2 menstrual (monthly) periods.

### Why is Antenatal Care important?

- ❖ To help the mother have a normal pregnancy and delivery
- ❖ To keep checking the growth of the unborn baby
- ❖ To check for problems and treat them
- ❖ To prepare the mother and family for safe childbirth and feeding the baby well

### What are the services offered during Antenatal Care?

- ❖ Checking the mother and baby are doing OK
- ❖ Taking medicines to prevent malaria and anaemia
- ❖ Counseling on partner and family support
- ❖ STD screening and treatment
- ❖ HIV counseling and testing (HCT) and PMTCT if needed
- ❖ Immunization against tetanus
- ❖ Urine testing for sugar and protein
- ❖ Early checking and referral for high risk pregnancies

### What food should a pregnant woman eat?

A balanced diet with foods from each group. See NUTRITION in green chapter: 5 The Way We Live

### What if a pregnant woman is not eating well?

In times of food shortages VHTs may be trained to check for malnutrition and refer women needing food supplements.

### How should a man support his partner during pregnancy?

- ❖ Help her by doing house work to reduce her work load.
- ❖ Provide enough food for the pregnant woman.
- ❖ Be faithful to her to avoid sexually transmitted diseases.
- ❖ Avoid quarrels and fights when she is pregnant.
- ❖ Go with her for Antenatal visits.
- ❖ Save and ensure money is kept for possible emergency during pregnancy and labor in case he has to go away.
- ❖ Being around as much as possible particularly during delivery.



## What should a pregnant woman not do?

- ✗ Take medicines, unless given by a qualified health worker.
- ✗ Take traditional herbs can damage the baby or cause abortion (miscarriage).
- ✗ Smoke or drink alcohol because they affect the normal growth of the child and the health of the mother.
- ✗ Drink too much tea and coffee as they are not good for the unborn baby.

## What are the common problems in pregnancy?

Many of these are not serious and some can be managed at home.

Condition	What to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Burning feeling in the chest and stomach (Heartburn)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take plenty of fresh fruits and green vegetables</li><li>• Drink plenty of water</li><li>• If symptoms continue, visit a health worker</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Difficulty in passing stools (Constipation)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take plenty of fresh fruits and green vegetables</li><li>• Drink plenty of water</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pain and difficulty while passing stool, with blood in the stools</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visit health worker</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Swollen veins in the legs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid wearing tight clothing or high shoes</li><li>• Avoid standing for long periods</li><li>• Have plenty of rest</li><li>• Place your feet at a higher level than the waist while resting or sleeping</li><li>• Visit the health worker if it does not improve</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Itching of private parts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visit health worker</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nausea and vomiting</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid fatty foods</li></ul>

## How can the woman prepare for the birth?

- ◆ Agree with her partner where she will deliver from
- ◆ Pack a bag with sheets, spare clothes, clothes for new baby, washing kit, candles or torch (a mattress may also be needed)
- ◆ Plan the food for her stay in the health unit – light food like juice, water, fruits and snacks to avoid constipation and help the delivery
- ◆ Organise for food to be brought to her by other family members or neighbours for after delivery
- ◆ Buy a Safe Delivery / Mama Kit to make sure she has equipment the midwife can use if the health unit lacks facilities
- ◆ Arrange for transport to the health unit for when labour starts



### What are the danger signs during pregnancy?

Advise the woman to go to the hospital /health centre immediately, WITHOUT waiting if she has any of these danger signs:

- ♦ Vaginal bleeding
- ♦ Fever
- ♦ Severe headaches
- ♦ Baby has stopped moving
- ♦ Too weak to get out of bed
- ♦ Severe pain in the belly
- ♦ Swelling of fingers, face and legs

### What are the signs of labour starting?

Advise the mother to go to the health facility or contact the skilled birth attendant if any of the following signs show:

- ♦ A bloody sticky discharge
- ♦ Painful contractions
- ♦ Waters have broken

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Saving lives by looking out for danger signs and helping women to the health unit
- ✓ Recording numbers of pregnant women and their births
- ✓ Referring pregnant woman to deliver with trained health workers
- ✓ Advising women to go for 4 check ups when pregnant
- ✓ Getting partners to support women and save money for what is needed
- ✓ Checking she is eating well and is preventing malaria and STDs
- ✓ Educating couples on prevention of STDs, malaria and encourage them to go for HIV testing and use condoms to prevent HIV
- ✓ Advising women and families on a balanced diet
- ✓ Making sure women sleep under a treated net which is tucked in and that she has taken malaria prevention medicine



### tips for pregnancy

- ✓ Be checked before 3 months and have at least 4 checks
- ✓ Go to a health worker with any danger sign
- ✓ Save some money



- 1 Go for ANC at least 4 times**
- 2 Put aside money for transport and other needs**

*Always refer pregnant women with danger signs immediately to a health unit*



## GIVING BIRTH

It is best for a woman to plan with her partner to deliver in a health unit. The type of delivery will depend on her age, previous number of pregnancies and if the pregnancy has had any problems.

### Why is it important to deliver in a health unit?

- ◆ For any complication or emergency
- ◆ For HIV treatment if needed
- ◆ Many dangers can occur at home
- ◆ To make sure the baby is checked at birth

### What must be done to help a safe delivery?

**Those attending to the mother and baby should ensure a safe and clean delivery.**

- ◆ Wash their hands with soap and water
- ◆ Put on clean and sterilized rubber gloves before attending to a woman who is to give birth
- ◆ Ensure that the surface used for the delivery is clean
- ◆ Handle the umbilical cord with clean hands only
- ◆ Tie the umbilical cord with a clean thread or cord tape
- ◆ Do not dress or cover the cord

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Advise mother to make sure person delivering baby washes hands, has clean water, soap and towel
- ✓ Look out for danger signs if a mother is delivering and refer to health unit so the mother or baby don't die
- ✓ Encourage pregnant women to deliver with a trained health worker at a health centre





### Tip: for a clean safe delivery

Women should plan with their partner

- ✓ To deliver with a person who is trained
- ✓ To have the money and equipment needed ready (plastic sheet, basin, bednet, gloves)
- ✓ To pack a bag with Mother's card, clothes for her and baby, sheets
- ✓ To plan who will care for children at home and mother when in health unit

**Pregnant women should plan to give birth with a skilled attendant and in a clean environment**

## AFTER THE BIRTH

Care must be given to the mother and baby after delivery up to six weeks. The most important time is the first 24 hours after giving birth and both mother and baby should be checked often during the first week to make sure everything is all right.

### What must be done immediately?

- ❖ Wrap the newborn
- ❖ Place the baby to breastfeed
- ❖ Check the mother has stopped bleeding
- ❖ Make sure the placenta is out and if it is inside refer the mother immediately to the health unit.

### Why is the first 24 hours after delivery so important?

This period is very important because of the possible complications that can happen to the mother and the newborn (this is the baby up to 28 weeks). During the first 24 hours many mothers and newborns die due to these complications. Therefore, the newborn baby and mother must be checked very closely. Family members can help by being nearby and looking for danger signs and if they see any by taking the mother and baby to the nearest health unit.



### When are checks done?

A mother should be seen by a trained health worker at least 3 times after giving birth.

- 1 within 6 hours
- 2 within six days
- 3 at 6 weeks

### What checks are given after delivery?

- ❖ Baby is weighed
- ❖ Breast-feeding is going well and on demand
- ❖ Looking for any danger signs
- ❖ Vitamin A for the mother and immunization of baby
- ❖ ARVs if the mother or baby is HIV positive
- ❖ Checking for any infections
- ❖ Advice on sex and family planning methods



**New born babies need to be weighed and checked on the first day**

## CARE OF A NEWBORN BABY

A newborn is a baby up to 28 weeks old.

### What do newborns need?

- ❖ Warmth
- ❖ Breast feeding
- ❖ Checking within 2 hours after being born and again after six days
- ❖ Cord care
- ❖ Immunization
- ❖ Eye care
- ❖ Watching their breathing
- ❖ Prevention of diseases

### How can a newborn be kept warm?

- ❖ Dry the baby
- ❖ Wrap in warm clothes
- ❖ Cover head showing face
- ❖ body-to-body contact with mother immediately after birth
- ❖ Keep both mother and baby in warm room as long as possible





### When must the newborn breastfeed?

- ❖ Start breastfeeding immediately within one hour after delivery even if the milk has not started.
- ❖ Give newborn baby only breast milk and continue for at least six months because it is the best and safest food for the baby
- ❖ The baby should be fed as often as it wants



### When must a newborn be checked by a health worker?

All newborn babies even if born at home should be checked and weighed immediately after birth within the first 2 hours and within the first 6 days.

### How can the baby's cord be cared for?

- ❖ Dry the umbilical cord with clean cloth or cotton
- ❖ Do not apply anything until it drops off by itself

### What immunization is given after the birth?

- ❖ Babies should be immunized with BCG and polio vaccines at birth or shortly after
- ❖ Vitamin A for mother



### How must the newborn's eyes be cared for?

Look at the colour of the eyes and check if they are red, yellow or have any pus. If they have these problems take the newborn for checking by a health worker as soon as possible.

### What other things must be done to make sure the newborn is healthy?

- ❖ Look to see that the baby is always breathing properly
- ❖ Prevent any infections and treat them straight away
- ❖ Wash hands with soap and water before handling or feeding the baby

### What are danger signs of a new born baby?

Go to hospital or health centre immediately, DO NOT wait, if your baby has any of the following signs:

- ❖ Bleeding or pus from the cord
- ❖ Feels too cold or too hot
- ❖ Difficult breathing
- ❖ Fits
- ❖ Unable to breast feed, or not feeding well
- ❖ Not moving
- ❖ Or very floppy or stiff
- ❖ Very pale
- ❖ Diarrhoea
- ❖ Pus coming from the eyes
- ❖ Yellow eyes or skin
- ❖ Small babies

### What if the baby is very small?

- ❖ It will need special care and to be kept warm
- ❖ The mother should put it next to her skin and breastfeed as often as possible, every 2 hours
- ❖ She should take it often to be checked by the health worker
- ❖ Ensure baby is taken to health facility and escort them if possible
- ❖ If discharged check on the mother and baby every day for the first week



- 1 Know the danger signs for newborns and refer to the health worker immediately**
- 2 Take extra care of small babies**



### How should a mother take care of herself after childbirth?

- ❖ Have enough rest and sleep
- ❖ Eat well (enough nutritious foods)
- ❖ Keep herself clean
- ❖ Ensure that she is physically and emotionally fit
- ❖ Avoid sex for at least six weeks after delivery
- ❖ Go for checks for both herself and the baby

### What care can be given at home?

Family members and VHTs should:

- ❖ Keep the mother and baby comfortable and warm.
- ❖ Help the mother with good hygiene for both herself and her baby by making plenty of water and soap available
- ❖ Advise mothers and family members to delay first baby bath to after 24 hours
- ❖ Husbands and family members should be near the mother and her baby and help with household chores, support her emotionally and physically and follow advice given by the health worker
- ❖ Ensure proper food is given to breastfeeding mother
- ❖ Advise mother to avoid early pregnancy during breastfeeding period by visiting family planning clinic

### What are the common danger signs after childbirth?

Go to hospital or health centre immediately, DO NOT WAIT, if you notice the following danger signs:

- ❖ Heavy bleeding from the private parts
- ❖ Fever
- ❖ Fits
- ❖ Severe headache
- ❖ Swollen and painful legs, feet or face
- ❖ Looking pale and very tired

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ VHTs should record births in the Village Register
- ✓ Ensure the mother and baby have gone for postnatal care
- ✓ Encourage the mother to breastfeed on demand and for 6 months without other food or drinks
- ✓ To encourage the family to help and care for the mother and newborn, like: cleanliness, doing chores and mother eating well



- ✓ Educate mother and family members on danger signs for both mother and baby and make it clear that they go immediately to the nearest health facility to see a skilled health worker.
- ✓ Encourage the mother and baby to sleep under an insecticide treated mosquito net.



- 1 Go for post natal care to check you and your baby.**
- 2 Keep clean and eat well.**

### **Tips for Post Natal checks**

- ✓ A woman should be checked 3 times after giving birth
  - 1 Within 6 hours
  - 2 Before 6 days
  - 3 At 6 weeks

## **BREASTFEEDING**

See BREASTFEEDING in NUTRITION in the green Chapter 5 The Way We Live

### **When should a mother start breast-feeding her newborn baby?**

She should start breast-feeding her newborn baby immediately (within one hour) after delivery even if the milk has not started coming.

### **Can the baby have other drinks or foods?**

No, give the newborn baby only breast milk and continue for at least six months with only breast milk.

### **Why is breast feeding so important?**

- ❖ Breast milk is the only food and drink the baby needs because it is best.
- ❖ Breast milk is free of germs



- ❖ Breast milk gives the baby protection against diseases
- ❖ Breast milk is free
- ❖ Breast-feeding keeps the baby next to the mother and helps to keep it warm
- ❖ Breast-feeding helps to develop the love between the mother and baby.

### How often should the newborn baby be fed?

The baby should be fed as often as it wants to. This is called on demand. At least not less than eight times a day. Small babies will need breast-feeding every 2 hours.



**Breastfeeding should start straight after delivery and continue for at least 6 months with no other drinks or foods**





*During the period of adolescence, boys and girls undergo body, emotional and relationship changes. The major health problems during this period relate to teenage pregnancies, unsafe abortions, STDs including HIV/AIDS.*





## What is adolescence?

Adolescence is a period of change and experimenting going from childhood into adulthood. This involves new relations between boys and girls and older persons. If this period is not well managed it can lead to different problems.

## What makes things difficult?

Adolescents have a lot of energy and they are experimenting and exploring.

- ❖ Lack of parental, family and community guidance to learn to cope and deal with the challenges of life
- ❖ Adolescents are under pressure from other adolescents to behave like them and they are easily influenced
- ❖ Poor access to sexual and reproductive health information and care services for teenagers
- ❖ Girls and boys being used for sex by older men/women
- ❖ Poverty and lack of employment means many parents cannot afford to pay school fees for their children, which makes some young people have sex to get things, especially girls.

## What are some of the problems teenagers face?

- ❖ Low self-esteem and confusion during puberty
- ❖ Early sexual practices and cross generational sex
- ❖ Sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/ AIDS from unprotected sex
- ❖ Early pregnancy and marriages making child mothers
- ❖ Child birth difficulties
- ❖ Dropping out of school leading to break in education and career development
- ❖ Alcohol and drug abuse
- ❖ Defilement (forced sex below 18 years of age) and rape of girls and boys
- ❖ Poor personal hygiene

## How can they avoid sexual and reproductive health problems?

- ❖ Adolescents need accurate information and counselling from their parents, families, communities and schools
- ❖ They need to spend time doing activities like sports, drama, vocational skills, religious activities, employment, household chores and education
- ❖ Avoid being influenced by others to engage in early sex, take alcohol or drugs or drop out of school
- ❖ Guidance is needed from family, community and teachers on positive social and cultural values



## What can families and communities do to promote adolescent health?

- ❖ Help them to develop moral and spiritual values as early as possible
- ❖ Teach them and help them to practice life skills (learning how to live with themselves, others and as part of the community)
- ❖ Share experiences of growing up and how to overcome challenges
- ❖ Parents/ guardians should be role models
- ❖ Create safe environments for adolescents especially in schools and avoid negative attitudes such as sexual harassment and abuse by the people they are expecting to protect them
- ❖ Parents/ guardians should support pregnant girls to attend school for as long as possible before and after delivery

## What should a young girl do if she gets pregnant?

- ❖ Confide in a trusted adult preferably the parents and guardians
- ❖ Go to a health facility as soon as she realizes she is pregnant to get counseling, advice and support
- ❖ Go for antenatal care as much as possible (at least 4 or more visits during pregnancy)
- ❖ Eat healthy foods to help keep strong
- ❖ Avoid the risk of unsafe abortion and deliver in a health facility.
- ❖ Use family planning methods after the baby is born
- ❖ Pregnant girls should attend school for as long as possible before the baby is born (efforts should be made to return to school after the baby is weaned)

## How can VHT help?

- ✓ Organize meetings for adolescents and their families on community sexual and reproductive health to correct myths and rumors
- ✓ Discourage early marriages and sex before marriage
- ✓ Make condoms available through the community condom distributors for sexually active adolescents
- ✓ Encourage adolescents to avoid peer pressure in sexual activities
- ✓ Promote abstinence amongst unmarried adolescents and discourage premarital sex
- ✓ Encourage positive behavior change and faithfulness
- ✓ Encourage adolescents to avoid peer pressure to have sex, take alcohol or drugs
- ✓ Report all older men /women/ teachers/ boda boda or taxi drivers who are chasing young girls into sex to the LC leaders
- ✓ Try to get teenagers to stay in school at least to 18 years
- ✓ Support adolescents to train in vocational skills and income generating activities



- ✓ Encourage teenagers to be active in sport, their religion, drama, household chores, personal hygiene

### **Tip; on working with teenagers**

- ✓ Involve them in all programmes to promote their health
- ✓ Listen to them and try to understand them
- ✓ Be patient and treat them like adults
- ✓ Be positive and encourage them
- ✓ Avoid judging them as this will send them away
- ✓ Give them correct information to breakdown any myths they have heard
- ✓ Be a link between them and the health provider and take them for services and give information if required
- ✓ Do not engage in sexual relations with them
- ✓ Be a good role model for them to believe in and follow
- ✓ Encourage them to be honest and open
- ✓ Act as a go between for problems in their families
- ✓ Check for peer counselors or people who have had special training to help

**Give information and support to adolescents by guiding them and referring them for health services**

*Teenagers have special problems if you have not been trained refer them to somebody who is*



## CHAPTER 4



FAMILY WELL BEING

This is about the needs of families especially of women and children who are sometimes mistreated by communities. It covers the health of the mother and child including their care, growth and development. It also looks at violence and abuse within families.

# FAMILY HEALTH



## FAMILY HEALTH

This is a very big subject most of it has been covered in RH in the yellow chapter. Here we talk of women's rights as a mother, wife and human being. These are important for a woman to be able to lead a healthy and enjoyable life.

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Every person has rights in the Constitution of Uganda and VHT can help communities make sure they respect these and that people treat each other well.
- ✓ This leads to improved health and well being for all community members who can each play their part to develop both themselves and their community.
- ✓ It helps to develop the whole nation and keep peace and security for all members of society. It makes resources available for other needs.

## WOMEN'S HEALTH

The most commonly violated human rights are women's rights. This means that the various freedoms and entitlements of women and girls of all ages are often ignored or suppressed by law, communities, families, culture and the behaviors of some societies.

### Women's rights are:

- ❖ Right to vote
- ❖ Right to body integrity
- ❖ Right to work
- ❖ Right to fair wages or equal pay
- ❖ Right to own property
- ❖ Right to education
- ❖ Right to enter into legal contracts
- ❖ Right to marriage and be a parent
- ❖ Right to religion
- ❖ Right not to be discriminated against.

## SHARING THE WORKLOAD

For a woman to cope and lead a valued life she needs to be supported by family members to do the household duties. The bigger the household, the greater the pressure on the woman to complete all the tasks.



Culturally women are expected to do most of the work but this puts pressure on her health.

### Why does so much work fall to women?

- ❖ Very often women are heads of households as their partners have died or left them
- ❖ Extra burdens of caring for absent or deceased relatives' children often fall to women placing extra pressure on them with greater numbers under their care at home
- ❖ As the situation has changed today and most women also work this means the home duties should be shared
- ❖ When she gets home tired she then has all the work at home to do

### How can the workload be shared?

- ❖ Fetching of water, firewood
- ❖ Washing and ironing of clothes
- ❖ Cleaning of utensils after eating
- ❖ Preparation of food for cooking
- ❖ Cleaning of the home and compound
- ❖ Looking after domestic animals
- ❖ Shopping
- ❖ Digging and growing food

### What are the benefits?

#### For the family

- ❖ Greater co-operation and understanding of what needs to be done
- ❖ Improved relationships
- ❖ More family harmony
- ❖ Appreciation for each other
- ❖ Greater respect for each other
- ❖ More time for other activities
- ❖ Less time spent on doing tasks

#### For the community

- ❖ Good role models for others
- ❖ Caring community members who understand how important support is
- ❖ Willingness to find solutions to problems
- ❖ More cooperation
- ❖ More healthy people so development grows faster
- ❖ Members who are more aware about the needs of others
- ❖ More willing to be kind and give extra support for those in extreme need
- ❖ Less discrimination and stigma
- ❖ Fostering of peaceful environments
- ❖ Better networks and helping systems for problems and emergencies



## TALKING WITH PARTNERS

When there is open communication between partners and in families most problems can be solved.

This is important for many reasons:

- ◆ To avoid disputes
- ◆ To reduce child abuse
- ◆ To prevent violence and fights, especially domestic violence
- ◆ To reduce risks like STDs, especially HIV/AIDS
- ◆ To agree on having sex instead of forcing it
- ◆ To agree to have safe sex to protect uninfected partners
- ◆ To reduce pressure and mental illness
- ◆ To prevent separations and break-ups
- ◆ To be good examples for the children
- ◆ To be role models for other families
- ◆ To encourage growth and development
- ◆ To handle change better



**Inform community members that women need to be supported and explain how to do this.**

## DEALING WITH DIFFICULTIES

Many times families will face special problems and will need extra help and support to cope and overcome them.

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Referring cases which need special help
- ✓ Listening and giving empathy (means understanding a person's situation)
- ✓ Supporting family members to overcome and find solutions
- ✓ Giving information and advice

### How should we deal with severe illness and death?

At times some family members may become very seriously ill and will need to be given extra care and support. Their condition may get worse so they will need help to do very simple things like feeding, bathing, dressing. Family members will need to spend a lot of extra time and energy to keep them comfortable. This will make sure that they can still have some quality of life.

If the person is very sick there is a possibility that they might die so it is important to give extra love and care so that they can feel better. During



this time find out their wishes and help them to make a will. It is much better to have things written down and witnessed by elders or local officials as this will prevent arguments within families about property and inheritance. It also helps to protect the rights of any children.

### How can things be made easier?

Sometimes a person can be very sick for many years which puts a lot of pressure on a family. It is good to get everybody involved and work out a programme of who will do what so that the burden is not so stressful. This should include health providers, spiritual leaders as well as family members and neighbours who each give different kinds of support.

## ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

At times people can get bad habits which lead to taking too much of something, like alcohol or drugs.

This can have a bad effect on a person's life in many ways like:

- ❖ Leading to risky behaviors like having unprotected sex, being violent
- ❖ Confuse a person's mind to know or think what they can do
- ❖ Spending too much money
- ❖ Show a bad example to children and siblings
- ❖ Stop a person from working or studying well

### When does this become a health problem?

Sometimes this can become an addiction which is when the person needs it all the time and cannot live without it. This is very dangerous and can cause a lot of serious health problems. Special treatment is needed to help the person stop which can take several months if the person is willing to change. Addictions have bad affects on families and often cause a breakdown of normal family life and serious financial difficulties..

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ To encourage the person to see their problem and own up to it
- ✓ To explain the consequences of continuing the habit and addiction
- ✓ To give examples of the health problems caused by alcohol and drugs
- ✓ To refer people for counseling and health services



**VHT should provide guidance and support to families to help them keep well, deal with and overcome difficulties**





## CHAPTER 4



FAMILY WELL BEING

This is the provision of basic needs for a child by the parents so they can grow normally and develop into a healthy young adult. It involves doing things to keep them healthy, like preventing childhood diseases.

# CHILD HEALTH



## DUTY OF CARE

Parents are to provide basic needs for a child. These include:

- ❖ Food
- ❖ Clothing
- ❖ Shelter
- ❖ Medical care
- ❖ Love and affection
- ❖ Education

It is important to remember that children are a gift and need to be looked after. Neglecting or mistreating (not providing for their needs or looking after them) them is wrong and will not build a good relationship between the parent and child. The law in Uganda provides for the rights of the Child and parents have a responsibility to meet these needs as much as possible.

## GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

This is normal growth and development of a child physically, mentally and spiritually.

There are different stages of development which each need different attention from the parents or caregivers. All are important and help to make to the child become a healthy adult and good member of the community.

### INFANCY – birth to 5 years

**This is the period when the child needs the parents most. At first through breast feeding for proper growth and development and to protect against diseases. Then as it begins to eat solid food. Soon it is learning to crawl then walk and talk and the little baby is gone.**

These early years are very important in influencing how a child gets on in life. It is important to show love and begin to teach them things they will need to know as they grow. Giving their basic needs and showing love will help them grow confident and secure. If they experience harshness and beating they will be fearful and withdraw from people. Later on this can make them slow learners and nervous around people.

The home is the main focus for them as it is where they know and where the people are who care for them.



## CHILD – 5 to 12 years

**During this period a child learns to do things for him/her self and starts to go to school and learn from other people as well as those at home.**

They develop skills in reading, writing, making and doing things. It is a time of asking many questions as they find out new things and want to know about life.

When people answer their questions and give them time to explain and help them discover they will develop a keen interest in learning. If they are not allowed to explore and find things out this will make them shy and nervous without courage to move ahead. It is also a time to teach good habits especially on personal hygiene and helping in the home, these can stay with them for life.

The school will become as important as the home as they learn new things in both places. It is necessary to send all children to school, both girls and boys, as having an education will give them more chances in their life in future.

## ADOLESCENT – 12 to 18 years

**This is the most difficult period with the change from being a child to becoming an adult. It is a time of confusion as the body grows and changes how it looks. It is a time of challenging authority which is about questioning people in power.**

Often called the teenage years, this time can be difficult for both parents and children as they fight things out with each other. The teenager is now more interested in his or her friends and not keen to help or be at home but wants to be around other young people. As their physical bodies develop they begin to look grown up so want to do grown-up activities and begin exploring things like sex, alcohol and going out. Most often it is the friends and age mates who they listen to and not their parents or relatives.

During this time parents need to be very patient and understanding and remember that they too once went through this stage in their lives. It is about balance – letting them explore and keeping to the rules. Sometimes there are very serious problems and some young people run off or parents are unable to control their children. This is when parents or children should seek support from trained counselors who can act as a go between. Being open and honest and talking about issues together will help to find solutions for them.



### Tip: for VHT

- ✓ Be a good role model yourself and with your family
- ✓ Give advice gently to families and not just when they are having problems
- ✓ Help teenagers and parents to talk to each other, act as a go between
- ✓ Always be positive about the good things people have done and try not to bring attention to the bad things
- ✓ Give correct health information so families can make their own decisions
- ✓ Encourage families to prevent problems by being aware of something before it can go wrong eg immunization, using an ITN
- ✓ Encourage parents to test for HIV and if they are positive to test their children
- ✓ Know the support groups in your area where you can refer people to go for special help

## SPECIAL NEEDS

Many children have special needs which might not been seen at birth but can develop later as they grow older. Sometimes these needs are from diseases which have damaged parts of their body or from problems during delivery. Other times they can be passed down from one generation to another. These children are just as important as other children and need just as much love and care to grow up healthy and confident in life.

### What are the main special needs?

**MOBILITY** – this is the loss of a limb or ability to move easily without help from others or by using a tool like a wheelchair or artificial limb



**DAMAGE TO SENSE** – this is when a sense is damaged, not working properly or not working at all, like sight (blind), sound (deaf), brain (learning difficulties)

**LIFE THREATENING CONDITIONS** - this is when the child has a condition or disease which could make them die, like AIDS, epilepsy, diabetes, cancer (leukemia), sickle cell anemia and they need to take special medication to keep them strong.

### What can be done for these children?

#### SUPPORT

- ◆ Visit them often and discuss with their parents what their needs are.
- ◆ These may be financial or physical – like buying them a tool to help them or helping them to do things.
- ◆ Sometimes the families caring for these children need help as it is very tiring for them, depending on the seriousness of the condition.
- ◆ Find out if there is a support group in your area for either children or their parents as this will give them the chance to meet and share with others in a similar situation.

#### CARE

- ◆ Usually these children will need extra care and love to feel special and useful to their families.
- ◆ They might need help doing basic tasks (like washing and feeding), whilst others might just need adults to take a real interest them and listen to what they have to say.
- ◆ If they are able to help in the home this should be encouraged and they should be considered as other children with an awareness of what they can and cannot do.
- ◆ Always remember that such children should not be locked away or chained as this is inhuman and will not help the situation, just make them feel useless.

#### REFERRAL

- ◆ Sometimes families cannot cope or require very special support for the welfare of their child.
- ◆ It is important to refer these families for specialist services who can help.
- ◆ Every condition is unique and each child's situation is slightly different so a trained medical officer like a doctor is the best person to know what to do when they find out about the case.



## REHABILITATION

- ◆ This is when training or aids is given to help with the special need. It might be exercises to help the person's condition or a physical aid like a wheelchair or artificial limb. Sometimes it may involve special education or services for people with similar conditions like for the deaf or blind.

### How can VHT help?

- ✓ By checking on children in the community to make sure they are growing properly.
- ✓ By recording them in the Village Register
- ✓ By encouraging parents to provide basic needs for their children.
- ✓ By making sure community members take children for immunization on time to prevent illness and disability.
- ✓ By giving advice and information to families on health care and services which they should be using.
- ✓ By finding and referring children with special needs for extra support and care.
- ✓ By being a link between health workers and families to check on treatment by making sure it is taken and all finished.
- ✓ By knowing danger signs and reporting these to a health worker for follow up or by taking the affected person to the health provider.
- ✓ By improving community awareness on their responsibilities as parents and caregivers.
- ✓ By teaching prevention methods for better family health like nutrition, disease control, sanitation
- ✓ Use social visits to expand your work.



**Home visits are the best way to check on families and know what their needs are**



## CHAPTER 4

# FAMILY WELL BEING



*Immunization is a way of protecting a person against specific diseases by building up the body's defense system. This is done by giving vaccines either through injections or by mouth.*

## IMMUNIZATION



In Uganda immunization is carried out against the following eight diseases on a routine basis:

- ❖ Poliomyelitis (commonly known as Polio)
- ❖ Tuberculosis (TB)
- ❖ Diphtheria
- ❖ Tetanus
- ❖ Whooping cough
- ❖ Measles
- ❖ Hepatitis B (a major cause of liver disease and cancer)
- ❖ Haemophilus influenzae type b (a major cause of meningitis and pneumonia)

### Who should be immunized?

- ❖ All children below one year should be immunized. However, children below five years who have not been immunized must receive doses they have missed, are due to receive or should be immunised according to the immunisation schedule
- ❖ All women of child-bearing age (15-49 years) and pregnant women should be immunized against tetanus. This protects them and their unborn babies
- ❖ In epidemic situations all people are immunized against the specific disease like meningitis and yellow fever

### What are the likely side effects following immunisation and how can they be managed?

Not all children who receive vaccines experience side effects. However if any reaction occurs, the advise the parent or caretaker as indicated below:

Reaction	Action
Local reaction (pain, and swelling or redness at the injection site)	Do not apply any medication It will heal by itself
Rise in the body temperature	Cool the body with a wet cloth (tepid sponging), wear light clothing, Give extra fluids

If temperatures or swelling persists or any other severe reactions occur, refer the child to the nearest health facility for proper management.

### How are vaccines given?

All vaccines are given by injection except polio vaccine which is given by putting two drops of the vaccine in the mouth of the baby.





## What are the benefits of immunization?

- ❖ Reduces the chances of children falling sick from diseases not falling sick from diseases
- ❖ Prevents complications such as lameness and blindness in children
- ❖ Protects children from liver disease and cancer later in life
- ❖ Protects the mother and her unborn baby against tetanus
- ❖ Helps the child's proper growth and development
- ❖ Saves time and money spent on treatment
- ❖ Protects the entire community against the 8 childhood immunizable diseases.

## What can parents and caregivers do to support immunization?

- ❖ Take the children for immunization 5 times before they are one year old and complete all the doses at the right time.
- ❖ Keep the immunization card safely and take it with the child every time you visit a health centre for any treatment.
- ❖ Remember to ask the health worker when to go back for the next dose.
- ❖ Ask the health worker to weigh your child and tell you the weight whenever you take the child for immunization to ensure proper growth.
- ❖ Inform your neighbours about the importance of immunizing their children.

## What are Supplemental Immunisation Activities (SIAs)?

These are also known as National Immunisation Days or Sub National Immunisation Days (NIDs/SNIDSs)

- ❖ It is the provision of additional doses of a given vaccine (e.g. measles, polio or tetanus toxoid) to all members of the target age group regardless of previous vaccinations.
- ❖ This is usually a special activity and does not require screening.
- ❖ The target age group may in some cases be wider than the usual age group for the routine programme.
- ❖ The doses of the vaccine given during SIAs do not replace the doses of routine immunisation.

## What is the purpose of SIAs?

1. To reach previously unreached children through bringing services closer to the people, (e.g. services offered on Saturday, Sunday, and any other extended hours) and difficult to reach populations
2. To provide booster doses to all the target groups in addition to their routine dose to combat a threat of a particular disease
3. To stop an outbreak of the disease from spreading (e.g. wild polio virus, measles) by immunizing everyone at the same time



## IMMUNISATION SCHEDULE FOR CHILDREN

Age of child	Vaccines given	Diseases Prevented	How and where the Vaccines given
0 (birth)	Polio and BCG	Polio and Tuberculosis	Drops in the mouth and injection on the right upper arm
6 weeks	Polio DPT-HepB+Hib 1	Polio, Diphtheria, Whooping cough, tetanus, Hepatitis B and Haemophilus Influenza type illnesses	Drops in the mouth Injection on the left thigh
10 weeks	Polio DPT-HepB+Hib 2	Polio, Diphtheria, Whooping cough, tetanus, Hepatitis B and Haemophilus Influenza type illnesses	Drops in the mouth Injection on the left thigh
14 weeks	Polio DPT-HepB+Hib 3	Polio, Diphtheria, Whooping cough, tetanus, Hepatitis B and Haemophilus Influenza type illnesses	Drops in the mouth Injection on the left thigh
9 months	Measles	Measles	injection on the left arm
		VITAMIN SUPPLEMENTATION	
6 months + every 6 months	Vitamin A Supplement	Prevent blindness and strengthen resistance against other diseases	Drops in the mouth

**Organize families to take their children for immunization at the right time**



## CHAPTER 4

FAMILY WELL BEING



*There are many kinds of violence and abuse done by members of the community. It is very common in some communities in Uganda and VHT can help to tell people, or, refer and report.*

VIOLENCE AND FAMILIES



## What do we mean by violence?

When a person uses force against another person on purpose to harm them. This can be done using a part of their body (like hand, foot, fist) or an object (like stick, belt, bottle) against a woman, man or child. Sometimes it can be forced sex or bad touches. It can even mean abusing somebody to make them feel very bad, like using cruel words or telling them they are no good.

## What are the different types of violence?

### PHYSICAL

Battering, pushing, beating, slapping, punching, kicking, hitting, burning, attack with a weapon, child labour.

### SEXUAL

Rape in and outside marriage, defilement, indecent touches, sexual harassment, incest, sodomy, forced teenage marriages, forced to have unprotected sex, forcing someone to watch or take part in pornography.

### MENTAL

Threats of violence, refusing to provide needs, using somebody's money without asking, denying sex, separating somebody from friends and relatives, being over protective.

### CULTURAL

Female Genital Mutilation, forced male circumcision.

## What are the results of violence?

### For the Survivors

- ◆ Sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Prostitution
- ◆ Loss of self esteem
- ◆ Mental break down
- ◆ Problems in work
- ◆ Death

### For the Community

- ◆ Loss of moral values
- ◆ Loss of work force
- ◆ Too much quarreling and fighting
- ◆ Sexual warfare

## What causes violence?

Violence comes from many different reasons, like:

- ◆ Some people having more power over others,



- ◆ Breaking down of community support systems and neighbours not helping each other
- ◆ Breakdown of extended families and school networks

### What problems make violence get worse?

#### POVERTY

Poverty itself does not lead to violence. However, the lack of needs, frustrations, suspicions and inequality can push it to happen.

#### CONFLICTS

When there are no ways to solve problems peacefully both at home or in the community this often ends in violence.

#### DRUGS

Drug or alcohol abuse can speed up the use of violence.

#### CULTURES

Many Ugandan cultures believe that men have control over women. They think they must control their money and what they do, and any woman who disobeys deserves a punishment. Some examples are: talking back to a man, disobeying a man, questioning a man about money or having women outside marriage, moving out of the home without a man's permission).

### How can VHT help?

Tell the community about the negative things that come with violence and how it breaks up families, communities and causes health problems

- ✓ Find out households with violent habits or possible violence and refer them for counseling.
- ✓ Make sure that violent abuses are reported to the local authorities.
- ✓ Warn any survivors to go for medical treatment as soon as possible and help them if needed.
- ✓ Advise people to avoid risky situations which can lead to violence, like taking too much alcohol or having many sexual partners.



**Always report violence and abuse and encourage people to use other ways.**

*Know that the Law in Uganda protects the rights of women and children and get Police Community Liaison Officers to help*

## CHAPTER 5



THE WAY WE LIVE

This looks at how individuals, families and communities can take action to improve their health and well being. It means changing personal and family habits to make life better.

# LIFESTYLES



Well being or good health is based on how we lead our lives and what we do to our bodies. If we take risks we put ourselves in danger. If we protect ourselves from risk we can prevent harm and disease. Doing and keeping good habits will help to keep us healthy. We need to teach these to our family members, especially children and community so everyone can stay well. Even if we have a medical condition (like diabetes) or illness (like HIV) it is about learning to live with it and manage it in our life.

### What can families do?

Family members need:

- ▶ To feed well, be clean,
- ▶ Use clean latrines and always wash hands after using it
- ▶ Do exercises regularly.
- ▶ Everyone should sleep under an insecticide treated mosquito net
- ▶ The family home should not be shared with animals

### What are the benefits?

#### For family

- ▶ Better management of the home
- ▶ Improved health so less spending on treatment at the health centre
- ▶ Able to do more activities when healthy.
- ▶ Members not falling sick all the time and infecting others
- ▶ Family members feel better and can lead a better life
- ▶ Individuals learn to take on personal responsibility
- ▶ Children do not die so easily
- ▶ Members can support each other better

#### For community

- ▶ Less health care services are needed
- ▶ Community is able to develop itself better without depending on others
- ▶ Support networks are in place for weaker members or those needing extra care and attention
- ▶ People are able to produce more and do several different activities
- ▶ Members are more interested in the welfare of the community as a whole and not just themselves
- ▶ Leaders are more willing to respond to community needs
- ▶ More cooperation and joint projects like communal saving schemes because of greater trust



- ▶ People are willing to take part in community health outreaches like HIV testing, immunization, sanitation etc
- ▶ Members get involved to improve their community especially for control of disease outbreaks, sanitation and water projects

### **For country**

- ▶ Less dependency on foreign aid for health care systems
- ▶ Resources for health care are enough to give essential services
- ▶ Population is more healthy and able to take care of itself
- ▶ Less people miss work due to sickness
- ▶ People live longer
- ▶ People share knowledge with each other
- ▶ More focus is on prevention rather than cure (treatment) of poor health
- ▶ Improved health of population means they have more money for other activities
- ▶ People are more aware of their bodies and health responsibilities
- ▶ Diseases such as HIV and mental illness are reduced because of prevention behaviours
- ▶ Children live longer because they have been immunized
- ▶ Outbreaks of diseases are better controlled
- ▶ Population is not too big for the available resources of the country



**VHT encourages families and communities to take charge of their health by learning good habits everyday at home as part of their lives.**

## **SEEKING HEALTH SERVICES**

Since “health is made at home” the main habits at home will play a big part in keeping the family well. However when it needs to be repaired this can be done at the Health Centre where proper care and treatment is given.

VHT members will explain this message to all families so that they can do all that is possible to remain healthy. They will also encourage them to go for proper check ups at the health centre when they see any danger signs or when treatment is needed.





## Why should you go for health services?

- ▶ A disease or injury which is not reported quickly could become serious and lead to disability or even cause death because of lack of health care.
- ▶ Government and partners have provided health services all over the country. There are also licensed private health practitioners.
- ▶ Family members should be advised to seek health care from the VHT member or at the nearest health unit as soon as they feel unwell.
- ▶ One should not allow the sun to set before a new health problem is reported to the VHT member or to the nearest health unit for proper advice or care.

## EXERCISE

Exercise helps the human body to keep fit and to burn off extra fat. This is very important to keep a person healthy. Many daily activities give enough exercise like walking, digging, some household chores (chopping wood, fetching water) and are useful to keep well.

## What happens when we do not have enough exercise?

When the human body does not exercise it keeps extra fat, making the person obese. This makes them unhealthy and more likely to get diseases.

Obesity causes:

- ♦ Blockage of the blood vessels
- ♦ The heart receives less blood
- ♦ Too much sugar for the body to break down
- ♦ Joint pains due to extra weight
- ♦ High blood pressure which can lead to headaches and strokes
- ♦ Problems breathing
- ♦ Sexual want (desire) and performance is reduced

## How do we prevent obesity?

Both adults and children need to take care of themselves to prevent obesity by:

- ♦ Eating a healthy diet balanced with vegetables, fruits, grains and fish with less fatty and sugary foods (see NUTRITION next in this chapter)
- ♦ Reducing the size of the meal so the body gets used to eating less but at the same time every day
- ♦ Doing regular exercise like playing football, netball, jogging, riding a bike



## How does exercise work for the body?

When a person is working only some muscles are used depending on the task. During exercise, many muscles are used which burns off fat and produces energy for the body. Afterwards the body feels stronger. Physical work should not replace exercise as they each have a different part to play.

Exercise, especially in groups, such as playing football, netball or running helps with the social bonding of communities. It promotes social health and togetherness.



- 1 Talk to community members about obesity and the need for exercise.**
- 2 Organize sports competitions.**

*Anyone who is too fat with health problems should be referred to the nearest health unit.*



## CHAPTER 5

# THE WAY WE LIVE



This means improving the quality and balance of types of food eaten at home. It is important for pregnant women, children and people with special needs to make sure they are able to grow properly. What a person eats has a big result on their health and well being.

# NUTRITION



## What types of food are needed by the body?

For people to be healthy they must eat a mix of the 3 types of food everyday.

Type	Name	What it does	Community name	Food examples
Body building	Protein	Help human bodies to grow	Source	Fish, beans, peas, milk, groundnuts, simsim, meat, chicken and soya products
Energy giving foods	Carbohydrates Fats	Provide us with energy to do our work	Staple food	Rice, sorghum, cassava, maize meal (posho), wheat flour, yams, potatoes and bananas, oils
Protective foods	Vitamins A, B, C, D, E, K and mineral salts	Protect us from getting diseases by boosting our immune system	Greens and fruits	<b>Fruits:</b> paw-paws, pineapples, water melon, oranges, and passion fruits <b>Vegetables:</b> dodo, cabbages, lettuce, egg plant, bitter tomatoes, tomatoes <b>Animal products:</b> milk, meat, liver, eggs and fish

## How can VHT help?

- ✓ By checking families are eating a balanced diet
- ✓ Encouraging them to grow a range of food to have a better diet, especially greens
- ✓ Check that people with special needs like pregnant women, small children and HIV patients are eating well
- ✓ Teach the community about the different foodgroups and how they can help health and growth



**Tell people to eat a balanced diet with foods from each group**



Children have malnutrition because they have a poor diet or because they are often sick.

### What happens if a child is malnourished?

Malnourished children do not grow well. If children are malnourished for a long time, they are shorter than other children of the same age. They are less active when they play and have less interest in exploring. They may have difficulty learning new skills, such as walking, talking, counting, and reading.

### Why is nutrition important for children?

The bodies of malnourished children do not have enough energy and nutrients (vitamins and minerals) to meet their needs for growing, being active, learning, and staying healthy. By helping children receive better nutrition, you can help children develop stronger bodies and minds. Also, malnourished children are often sick. Illness is a special challenge for a body that is weak from poor nutrition.

### What can happen with malnutrition?

- ❖ Malnourished children are more likely to die than well-nourished children.
- ❖ Over half of the children who die from common childhood illness diarrhoea, pneumonia, malaria, and measles are poorly nourished.
- ❖ Pregnant women can have problems during pregnancy or childbirth and they or their baby can die.



### What are the ways to see malnutrition?

When many children in a community are poorly nourished, it is sometimes difficult to see which children are severely malnourished. Some VHTs will be trained in how to look for severe malnutrition to save lives.

The two signs of severe malnutrition are:

- 1 Red on MUAC strap
- 2 Swelling on both feet.

### What are the ways to check for malnutrition?

- ▶ Use a MUAC strap. This is a small tape for measuring how a child is growing. When it shows red this means severe malnutrition in children with severe wasting (very thin), a condition called marasmus.
- ▶ Look at both of the child's feet for swelling. This shows severe malnutrition in children with the condition called kwashiorkor. Although these children have severe malnutrition, their bodies are swollen, round and plump, not thin.

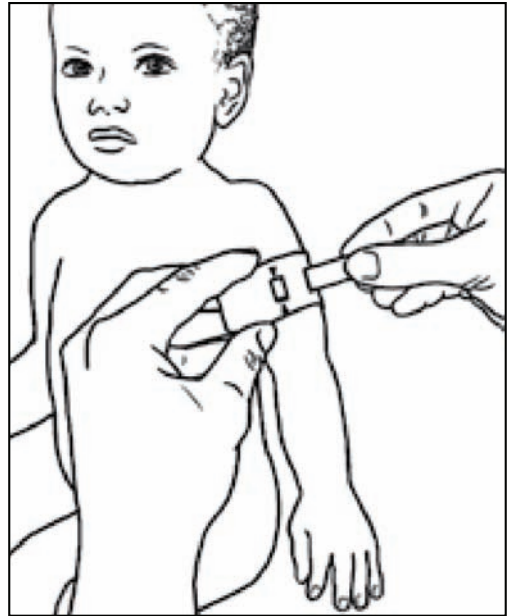


## How do I check for danger signs?



### 1 Red on MUAC strap

The circumference of the arm is the distance around the arm. Measure around the arm of all children age 6 months up to 5 years with a MUAC strap. A RED reading on the MUAC strap shows severe malnutrition.



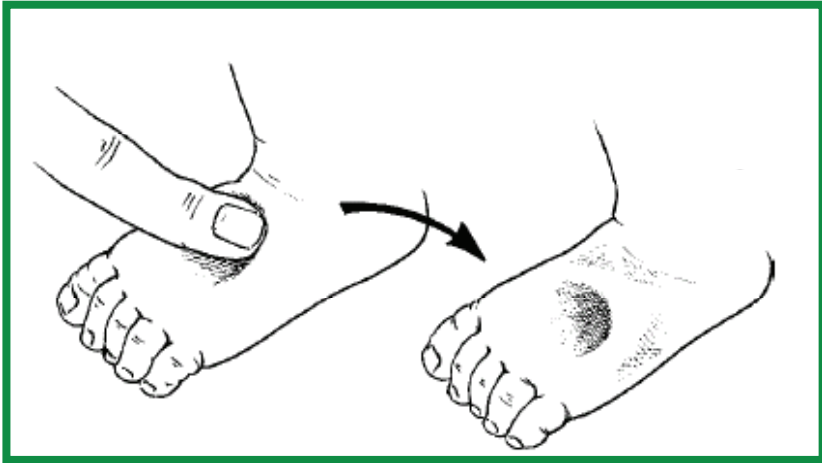
### 2 Swelling of both feet

With severe malnutrition, a large amount of fluid may gather in the body. For this reason, a child with severe malnutrition may sometimes look round and plump. Because the child does not look thin, the best way to identify severe malnutrition is to look at the child's feet.



### How is this done?

Gently press with your thumbs on the top of each foot at the same time for three seconds. (Count 1001, 1002, 1003.) The child has SEVERE malnutrition, if dents remain on the top of BOTH feet when you lift your thumbs. For the sign to be present, the dent must clearly show on both feet.



### How can VHT help?

- ✓ By referring people, especially children and pregnant women who are malnourished for checking at a health unit
- ✓ When trained you can look for danger signs using MUAC strap and swelling of the feet
- ✓ Encourage families to give children a balanced diet
- ✓ Refer very poor families for food supplements



**If you are trained check for malnutrition in children and refer for treatment.**



Eating enough food means eating the right foods, in the right quantity and at the right times. Failure to give enough food to a child results in malnutrition and infection. The food needs of a child keep changing with time as they grow older.

### Why is feeding important?

- ◆ For survival and growing healthy
- ◆ To make sure that a child is able to learn well

### What food should be given to babies?

- ◆ Breastmilk only for the first 6 months
- ◆ Solid foods with breast milk from 6 months to 2 years

### Why is this important?

A baby is very small and fragile so needs as much good nutrition as possible.

- ◆ Breastmilk contains natural nutrients to help the baby grow well
- ◆ Giving breastmilk will build the baby's defense (immune) system so it can fight off diseases
- ◆ It ensures that a baby develops normally

### When should breastfeeding start?

As soon as the baby is born, or within the first hour. It has a special yellow colour for the first 2 days which protects the newborn baby against diseases and infections. After this the normal milk comes and keeps coming as the baby sucks.

### How long should breastfeeding continue?

- ◆ Babies should take breastmilk ONLY with nothing else for the first 6 months. This is called exclusive breastfeeding.
- ◆ It is advised to feed all young babies up to 2 years with breastmilk. This protects them more and keeps a close bond with their mother helping them to grow and develop well. It also reduces the chance of getting diseases.

### What should a mother do if she does not have enough milk?

- ◆ Breastfeed the baby more often.
- ◆ Make sure the baby is sucking properly with its mouth wide open and the lower lip is down,
- ◆ She should see a counselor who is trained in infant and child feeding, especially if she is HIV positive.







### Why should a mother not give other foods early?

- ♦ Giving other foods and drinks (even water, porridge or tea) can damage a baby's delicate stomach and it can get infections from the spoon or cup
- ♦ Germs cause diseases like diarrhoea and can be very serious for a young baby and even cause death

### What if a mother is HIV positive?

She should get advice from the health worker to know if she should breastfeed or do other feeding options. It will depend on the amount of HIV virus in her body and if she is on ARV treatment. See a trained counselor.

### When can solid foods be given?

- ♦ When the baby is over 6 months soft or mashed foods can be given.
- ♦ Slowly by slowly more solid foods can be given and more often.
- ♦ Continue breastfeeding after food.

### What types of food can be given?

It is important to give foods from each of the 3 food groups (see table at beginning of NUTRITION).

- ♦ Fruits and vegetables will protect the baby's defense system and make sure the baby does not get constipated or diarrhoea
- ♦ Energy foods like posho, matoke or potatoes will build the baby to become strong
- ♦ Proteins like meat, fish or beans will help the baby grow

### What other drinks can be given?

After 6 months babies can take small amounts of:

- ♦ Water which has been boiled and cooled, juice (mixed with boiled water), porridge and cow's milk (which has been boiled or pasteurized)
- ♦ Do not give sweet drinks like soda or tea as the baby will get a taste for sugar too early
- ♦ Give as much breastmilk as possible as this is the best liquid for the baby to drink until 2 years



## How must these foods be given?

- ◆ Always wash hands with soap and water before and after feeding and preparing food
- ◆ Give small amounts but often to help the baby grow
- ◆ Make sure all utensils are properly washed and cleaned with boiled water and kept covered away from insects and flies

## What are good snacks to give as the baby grows?

As the baby grows they will need a snack in between meals, usually after 8-9 months

- ◆ Fruits like papaya, mango, banana, passion fruits
- ◆ Vegetables like carrots, avocado
- ◆ Chapati, biscuit or bread to suck

## What foods or drinks should not be given to small babies?

- ◆ Nuts which have not been grounded
- ◆ Big pieces of meat like roasted kind which are hard
- ◆ Fish which has bones (always remove and mash fish with fingers to be sure there are no bones)
- ◆ Coffee
- ◆ Sodas as they have too much sugar and gas

Use this table as a guide for feeding infants making sure they eat a balance of the foods shown in the table below:

Type of food	Age	Amount	Number of times a day
Breastmilk only	Birth – 6 months	As much as wanted	On demand
Breast milk with solid food	6 months	2 -3 spoons	3
Breast milk with solid food	7-8 months	4-5 spoons	3-4
Breast milk with solid food and snack	9-12 months	3 meals + 1 snack	3
Breast milk with solid food and snack	1-2 years	3 meals + 2 snacks	5



## How can VHT help?

- ✓ Look for any danger signs and refer immediately to a health worker
- ✓ Make sure all mothers are breastfeeding their newborn babies. If they are having problems refer them to a health worker for support
- ✓ Check that mothers are breastfeeding exclusively for the first 6 months
- ✓ Teach mothers the importance of breastfeeding up to 2 years for protecting their baby against diseases
- ✓ Show mothers how to give a balance of foods from each food group to help the baby grow well, including giving snacks
- ✓ Check the hygiene and sanitation situation in the home and give advice on what to improve on
- ✓ Refer HIV positive mothers for PMTCT services and advice on infant feeding
- ✓ Refer babies with signs of malnutrition to a health worker for food supplements



- 1 Only breastfeed for the first 6 months from birth**
- 2 Give a balance of foods and continue breastfeeding up to 2 years**



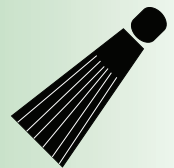
## CHAPTER 5



THE WAY WE LIVE

This is keeping oneself and the home clean. It includes promoting skills and practices which help people, families and communities to have a clean and healthy environment. It involves both small things like washing hands with soap and water and big things like building a pit latrine.

# SANITATION



## What are the main areas of sanitation?

- ♦ Safe removal of human excreta (faeces and urine).
- ♦ Good personal, home and food hygiene habits.
- ♦ Safe disposal of solid and liquid waste, (rubbish, garbage, animal waste and dirty water).
- ♦ Collection and storage of safe water especially for drinking.
- ♦ Control of insects and pests that can spread diseases (like flies, rats and mosquitoes).

## What are the benefits of good sanitation?

### HEALTH

Reduced sicknesses from sanitation-related diseases, like malaria, diarrhoea.

### FINANCIAL

Less spending on treating diseases by families and communities.

### EDUCATION

Improved performance by school children who miss less school due to sickness.

### ENVIRONMENT

Better environments due to reduced dumping of human waste (faeces and urine), rubbish (garbage) and dirty water.

### WORK

Promotion of tourism and trade as clean environments will attract tourists and trading partners.

## What are some diseases caused by poor sanitation?

DISEASE	EFFECT
Diarrhoea and diarrhoeal diseases (dysentery, cholera, typhoid)	Dehydration and death
Respiratory diseases (cough, TB)	Ill health and death
Intestinal worms (hook worms, round worms, bilharzia)	Anaemia, malnutrition, diarrhoea and death
Dental problems (tooth decay, gum disease and oral infections)	Loss of teeth, bad smell, infection of blood (septicaemia) and death
Skin infections (scabies, lice, ring worms)	Skin itching, discolouration of skin, secondary infections
Eye infections (trachoma, conjunctivitis,)	Poor eye sight and blindness
Malaria	Ill health, possibly death



## How can sanitation prevent diseases?

- ◆ By using clean water
- ◆ Boiling water for drinking
- ◆ Keeping clean (personal hygiene)
- ◆ Washing hands with soap and water
- ◆ Care with food
- ◆ Living separate from animals

## What does personal hygiene mean?

Personal hygiene is how we keep our bodies, our teeth, our hair, our clothes (including underwear, handkerchiefs, socks), towels and all personal belongings clean. Personal hygiene includes good habits like:

- ◆ Washing hands with soap and water before eating food
- ◆ Washing hands after visiting the toilet/ latrine
- ◆ Cutting hair/ nails,
- ◆ Brushing teeth after every meal
- ◆ Regular washing of our bodies and clothes.

## What does personal hygiene involve?

It includes care of the whole body:

- ◆ Washing hands before, after eating food and visiting the latrine/toilet
- ◆ Hair (regularly washed/shampooed and cut)
- ◆ Face (cleaned at least twice a day)
- ◆ Ears (cleaned often)
- ◆ Washing clothing and beddings (to get rid of parasites like fleas and lice).

## What can good personal hygiene do?

When good personal hygiene behaviours (habits) are kept we can prevent diarrhoea, intestinal worms and skin infections such as: skin ulcers, scabies, fungi.

## How can personal hygiene be maintained?

- ◆ Wash your hands before and after eating food.
- ◆ Wash hands and body with water and soap regularly.
- ◆ Cover your food and water from dirt and flies.
- ◆ Proper use of latrines /toilets.
- ◆ Wash your hands and your children's hands with soap and clean water after using the toilet.
- ◆ Mother washes her hands with soap and clean water and baby's hands before breastfeeding.
- ◆ Wash your hands with soap and clean water after attending to your baby.
- ◆ Wash your hands with soap and clean water before and after preparing food.



## What is domestic hygiene?

Domestic hygiene is the keeping of a clean and healthy home and compound. It means doing simple health practices to avoid infections like: diarrhoea, intestinal worms, teeth decay, skin diseases, malaria, sleeping sickness and TB.

## What are the main good habits at home?

- ♦ Hand washing
- ♦ Cleaning everywhere
- ♦ Using a pit latrine or toilet
- ♦ Clean safe water for drinking
- ♦ Washing body and clothes
- ♦ Careful handling of food

## What are the signs of a good hygienic home?

PLACE	ACTION	REASON
Inside house	Open windows and doors Sweeping and mopping	Clean air to flow and prevent cough To remove dirt
Rooms	Wash and clean beddings	Kill germs, lice and fleas
Beds	Use treated bednet	Prevent malaria
Bathroom	Keep clean and make sure it has soak pit and is separate from toilet	Stop infection spreading and overflow of dirty water or excreta
Kitchen	Fireplace for cooking should be raised Window or chimney for smoke	Reduce accident of burning Prevent breathing in smoke
Latrine or toilet	Keep a distance from house or if inside as separate room	Prevent touching and spreading of faeces
Water	Make tippy tap Storage for drinking water separate from washing water	Save water Prevent contamination of drinking water



Compound	Dig vegetable garden	For good nutrition
	Slash and clear bushes	Stop mosquitoes breeding
	Make drying rack	For utensils to stay clean
	Line for clothes	To dry clean in air
	Clear drains and water channels	Stop stagnant water and mosquitoes breeding
	Make separate hut for animals to sleep	Prevent family getting sick from animals

### What is school hygiene?

School hygiene is the different ways to keep pupils bodies, uniforms, and the school environment clean. Like the classrooms, compound, toilets and water facilities which must be clean and working properly.

### What are the benefits of school hygiene?

- ♦ Creation of a safe, clean, learning and working environment for students and staff.
- ♦ School children will learn important basic hygiene habits and practices.
- ♦ Reduced sickness and missing of school.
- ♦ Provision of safe water so reduction of water related diseases.
- ♦ Better academic performance and reputation of school.

### How can the community help?

- ♦ Support all school hygiene and sanitation programs.
- ♦ Make sure that the hygienic practices done at home are also promoted at school and in other homes in the community.

### How can VHT help with hygiene?

- ✓ Be a good role model and keep a model home
- ✓ Teach people that their good habits will prevent diseases and health problems
- ✓ Check and note in the Village Register homes without pit latrines (see blue chapter VHT Record Keeping)
- ✓ Show each member of the family how to wash hands properly and when they should wash hands
- ✓ Remind them about food handling (see NUTRITION in this chapter)
- ✓ Make schools aware of what they can do to keep good hygiene





- 1 During home visits check the sanitation situation.**
- 2 Inform households and communities what they can do to improve their personal and home hygiene.**

## INFECTION CONTROL

### Why is it important to control infections?

- ♦ To avoid diseases spreading to other people
- ♦ To prevent risk of HIV
- ♦ To save lives

### What are some ways to control infections?

OBJECT	EXAMPLE	ACTIONS
Hands	Clean	Wash with soap and water
Syringe	Injection	Do not share Dispose in safe place
Knife/ blades	Circumcision	Do not use for more than one person Sterilize in boiling water before use
Blades/ instruments	Childbirth	Sterilize before using Dispose of in sealed container
Placenta and baby's cord	Childbirth	Health worker must dispose properly

### What can a person do?

- ♦ Make sure the health worker always examines you when they have washed their hands first
- ♦ When your blood is being tested the health worker should wear gloves
- ♦ Do not use a syringe which has been used on somebody else
- ♦ Make sure instruments like knives and razors are sterilized before being used



### How can VHT help?

- ✓ Encourage mothers to deliver in a health facility or with a well trained birth attendant
- ✓ Teach families not to share and reuse sharp instruments which have not been first sterilized
- ✓ During cultural ceremonies make sure any instruments are properly sterilized each time they are used for each new person



**VHTs should make their home and habits a model for their neighbours to follow**



## CHAPTER 5

THE WAY WE LIVE



Water is part of everyday life and without it we would die. We use it to drink and to wash and keep our bodies and homes clean. It is every person's responsibility to use it wisely and to protect it. Communities need clean water to be able to survive so members must be made aware of the importance of looking after it.

# WATER



## What are the common sources of water?

- ◆ Rain water
- ◆ Surface water: rivers, ponds, swamps, lakes, streams
- ◆ Underground water: shallow and deep wells, springs
- ◆ Boreholes
- ◆ Tap water
- ◆ Protected springs

## What is safe water?

This is water which is clean and has not been contaminated with objects and chemicals leaking or spilling into it.

- ◆ In Africa most water is gathered from communal sources, which leads to easy contamination as many people are using the same source.
- ◆ Communities need to work together to protect their water source as this will keep them all healthy and not lead to water born diseases, which can quickly spread to others.

## What does the term “safe water chain” mean?

Safe water chain refers to the way of collecting water from a safe water source in clean water containers, and keeping it safely protected from any contamination at home or in other public places such as schools, until it is used.

SOURCE → COLLECTION → STORAGE → USE

## How can water be contaminated?

Direct bathing, swimming and defecating in the water or near the water source.

- ◆ Leakage through the soil by a nearby latrine(s).
- ◆ Use of dirty containers during collection, storage and use
- ◆ Lack of protection of the water source area

## What are the different ways of preventing water contamination?

- ◆ Protect all water sources especially spring wells, and boreholes
- ◆ Use clean water containers to collect water
- ◆ People should avoid washing, bathing, near or around the water sources
- ◆ Do not graze animals near or around the water sources
- ◆ Latrines should be located 30 meters away from the home down stream
- ◆ Drinking water should be stored in a clean and covered container
- ◆ Patients with water-related diseases should be discouraged from collecting water from the community water sources.
- ◆ Locate water sources away from latrines/toilets



## What are the benefits of safe water?

### HEALTH

Improved health by not getting diseases from water.

### FINANCIAL

Reduced spending on disease treatment and increased productivity at house hold, community and national levels.

### EDUCATION

Better performance in school by children who are not held back by water-related diseases.

## How can VHT help?

- ✓ Note all water sources on the community map
- ✓ Immediately report unprotected or contaminated water sources
- ✓ Tell neighbours about the safe water chain
- ✓ Show people how to keep water safe and use it well
- ✓ Be a role model in the village in how you use and keep water



- 1 Find out how members of the community collect and keep their water safe.**
- 2 Teach them the safe water chain and raise awareness about protecting water sources.**



## CHAPTER 5



THE WAY WE LIVE

This is keeping the mouth clean to prevent diseases and problems with the teeth and gums. It is very important as the mouth has a key part to play in keeping the body in order since it is used to eat and communicate. It is also an easy way for spreading infections, like when coughing or spitting.

ORAL HEALTH



## What are the main diseases in and around the mouth?

- ❖ Tooth decay
- ❖ Gum diseases
- ❖ Ulcers
- ❖ Wounds or burning of the tongue
- ❖ Fever blisters
- ❖ Dry or cracked lips

## What are some of the causes of these diseases?

- ❖ Too much sugar and unhealthy food
- ❖ Ulcers and sores from STDs
- ❖ Not brushing the teeth

## What are the signs of tooth decay?

- ❖ Feeling pain in the tooth while taking hot or cold food or drinks
- ❖ A hole in the tooth, which usually shows as a black or dark spot
- ❖ Pain mostly at night, in the later stages
- ❖ The whole tooth is completely destroyed living behind roots or small fragments out of the gum in extreme cases
- ❖ The roots that remain in the gums may become black or brown

## What happens if tooth decay is not treated?

If tooth decay is not treated it can lead to swelling of the jaws, called dental abscess. This is a very painful and dangerous condition, which requires immediate attention of a dental health care worker.

## What are the main signs of gum diseases?

- ❖ Redness of the gums due to swelling
- ❖ Gums bleed easily when touched or while brushing the teeth
- ❖ Swelling of the gums
- ❖ Foul smell in the mouth
- ❖ A hard coating on the gum
- ❖ Pus may form on the gum margins in extreme cases
- ❖ Teeth are detached from the gums
- ❖ Teeth may be too sensitive to heat, coldness or touch



## What can be done to prevent these?

- ❖ Brushing teeth twice a day, especially in the morning and before sleeping at night, using a toothbrush with toothpaste or a chewing stick
- ❖ Reduce taking too many sugary foods and drinks and only with meals and not every day
- ❖ Do not share toothbrushes and change them every 3 months
- ❖ Rinse the mouth using clean drinking water



## How can VHT help?

- ✓ By educating families on the importance of oral health as part of their daily health routine.
- ✓ By informing people that using toothpaste with fluoride (which contains a protective mineral) will keep the teeth strong and prevent holes and plaque forming on your teeth.
- ✓ By making sure families are eating a balanced diet which does not have too much sugar.
- ✓ By encouraging people, especially children to drink less sodas but more fresh fruit juices.
- ✓ By advising HIV positive people to take extra care to prevent ulcers and sores.
- ✓ By reminding people of good infection control habits like covering the mouth when coughing or using a container to spit.



- 1 Brush teeth twice a day and take less sugar in food and drinks**
- 2 See a dental health worker as soon as you get problems**





## CHAPTER 5



This means health of the mind and how a person feels about themselves and how they can respond to others. Sometimes problems cause stress and pressure so they cannot lead a normal life.

THE WAY WE LIVE

# MENTAL HEALTH



## What does mental health mean?

- ❖ How one feels about himself or herself and others.
- ❖ How one responds to the day to day demands of life.
- ❖ How one thinks, feels and acts when dealing with daily life problems.
- ❖ How one handles stress, relates to others and makes choices for him/herself to enjoy normal life.

## How can mental health problems begin?

- ❖ An event or experience may have a very bad result on a person and they cannot cope or look after themselves well.
- ❖ Other times a person can be born with a limited ability to manage life and they need to be supported by a carer.

## What are some common mental health problems in Uganda?

- ❖ Depression
- ❖ Extreme anxiety (worry)
- ❖ Strange behaviour often called 'madness' (Schizophrenia)
- ❖ Mental illness resulting from diseases such as severe fever
- ❖ Strange behaviour after traumatic (a very shocking experience) events such as war (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)
- ❖ Mental retardation
- ❖ Alcoholism (taking too much alcohol)
- ❖ Drug addiction like marijuana cannot live without it because you think you need it all the time

## What are the signs of these mental health problems?

- ❖ Extreme fear
- ❖ Sadness that stays for a long time (depression)
- ❖ Too much worry
- ❖ Having crazy beliefs (delusions)
- ❖ Believing things happen different from what is real
- ❖ Hearing voices that do not exist (hallucinations)
- ❖ Not caring for themselves (especially personal hygiene)
- ❖ Non stop or confused talking
- ❖ Unable to respond to situations with understanding like laughing after learning of a relative's death
- ❖ Failing memory and cannot remember past or recent events
- ❖ Aggressiveness means being angry and forceful to others
- ❖ Troubled sleeping patterns
- ❖ Restlessness.



## What are the common causes of mental illness?

Mental health problems may not be caused by any single thing but by a mixture of different things. These could be physical, social or biological, like:

- ❖ The problem being passed on within a family e.g. from a grandparent, parent (hereditary).
- ❖ Infections and illness like. HIV/AIDS, malaria, meningitis or brain tumours.
- ❖ Direct injury to the brain, through accidents, injury or disease.
- ❖ Stressful situations like: loss of a job, or a loved one, sudden disability or war situations
- ❖ Drug or alcohol abuse
- ❖ Poor up-bringing of children like: broken families, violence in homes and community, wars and other disasters
- ❖ Poor development of the brain due to poor feeding especially in children.

## How can you help people with mental health problems?

- ❖ Many people have a belief that those who suffer from mental illness have no value to society. This thinking needs to be changed.
- ❖ People with mental health problems need your love and care. They should not be locked up or kept alone but helped to get good medical care.

## What are the common myths about the mentally ill?

People often wrongly think that those who are mentally ill are

- ❖ Not stable and unsure what they will do
- ❖ Need special people to handle them
- ❖ Always dangerous to those around them
- ❖ Cannot be treated
- ❖ Never recover
- ❖ Are bewitched
- ❖ Are cursed
- ❖ Do not need any medical treatment like other patients.

These beliefs and myths are not true. Mental illnesses are just like any other illnesses and can be treated.

## What can be done to prevent mental illness?

- ❖ Note any mental health problems and seek early treatment to prevent complications
- ❖ Go for regular medical checks to ensure proper health
- ❖ Get early treatment for infections especially those that can affect the brain like meningitis, cerebral malaria
- ❖ Counsel stressed individuals like those who have lost jobs, had sudden disability or been raped to prevent mental breakdown



- ❖ Avoid taking too much alcohol
- ❖ Give love and care to children and prevent child abuse to ensure normal child development
- ❖ Provide psychological support to those affected by war, disasters, and death to help them cope with their situation. This can be talking with a trained counselor about their experiences to help get over them
- ❖ Educate parents on proper child up-bringing practices
- ❖ Monitor and report to health workers behaviours that seem to be abnormal to prevent complications.
- ❖ Get children fully immunized against the eight childhood killer diseases
- ❖ Women to attend antenatal care at least 4 times during pregnancy to ensure proper growth and development of their babies.


### How can we care for the mentally ill?

The mentally ill if cared for and given proper treatment can get better, regain their full potential and help to develop their community.

### How can VHT help?

VHT can help people with mental health problems by:

- ✓ Understanding and accepting them
- ✓ seeing mental health problems early
- ✓ Making sure that they receive early medical and psycho-social treatment
- ✓ Supporting and caring for them by checking that they take their treatment correctly.



**Anybody can get a mental health problem, so encourage your mental well being by having a healthy lifestyle.**



## CHAPTER 5



A person with a disability is somebody who has a problem with their body or mind. It does not mean that the person cannot have a normal life it means they need to have support and adapt to do things in different ways.

THE WAY WE LIVE

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



## How can disability happen?

- ◆ In the mother's womb, during birth
- ◆ From an infection or disease when growing up
- ◆ From an accident
- ◆ Sometimes it can be passed from one generation to the next within a family

## What are problems and myths for PWDs?

Many people wrongly believe that people with disabilities are a curse on a family.

- ◆ This leads people to hide them or treat them badly.
- ◆ Their disability is not their fault and they should not be punished for it.
- ◆ They need help and support to manage it and lead a normal life.
- ◆ Often other people take advantage of PWDs and abuse and discriminate against them.
- ◆ This makes them feel worse and more alone in life and can lead to other problems like mental health or suicide.
- ◆ PWDs make a big contribution to helping others and being part of society by doing many useful things and they must be respected and given their rights like other citizens.

## How can VHT help?

- ✓ By finding and knowing PWDs in your community and asking what their needs are
- ✓ Recording them in the VHT Record book
- ✓ By giving advice and support on health issues like disease control and prevention (especially HIV), sanitation, safe water, nutrition
- ✓ By informing health workers of PWDs who need special care and attention and especially those who are at risk of mistreatment and abuse
- ✓ By linking them to organizations who provide services like special education for deaf/ blind, or vocational training, or income generating projects
- ✓ By making other community members aware that they are normal people but with special needs
- ✓ By stopping stigma and discrimination against them



**Treat PWDs with dignity and encourage community members to support and not treat them badly**