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FACULTY OF MEDICINE & HEALTH SCIENCES

ATRIA

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MEDICAL FMHS

Little Lives Big Care

Physical & Infectious Illness

Learning & Development Conditions

Parenting & Everyday Care

Community & Support

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FACULTY PROFILE

UNIMAS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK
FACULTY OF MEDICINE & HEALTH SCIENCES

Vision

A Global Leader in Medicine and Health Sciences Education.

Mission

To enhance the health and well-being of the global community through the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, and strategic collaboration.

FOREWORD

Dear readers,

It is a great pleasure to see the fourth issue of ATRIA. Each edition of ATRIA has sought to highlight topics that matter deeply to our community, and this issue is no exception. In this edition, we turn our attention to those who represent our future our children.

The theme, *"Little Lives, Big Care"*, reminds us that the health and well-being of children require more than medical treatment alone. It calls for a collective commitment from families, healthcare professionals, educators, and communities to ensure that every child has the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive.

Within these pages, readers will find a diverse collection of articles covering childhood illnesses, learning and developmental issues, parenting and caregiving, as well as the importance of early screening and timely intervention. Together, these topics highlight the many dimensions of child health and the vital role that prevention, awareness, and compassionate care play in shaping healthier futures.

At the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, we remain committed to advancing health through education, research, and community engagement. By fostering greater understanding of children's health needs, we hope to contribute towards a society where every child receives the care and support they deserve.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the editorial team and all contributors for their dedication in producing this issue of ATRIA. I hope this edition informs, inspires, and reminds us of the profound responsibility we share in caring for the youngest members of our society. For in every child we nurture today lies the promise of a healthier and brighter tomorrow.

Happy reading.

Prof. Dr. Asri bin Said
Dean

Dear Readers,

This issue brings **Little Lives, Big Care** into focus, reminding us how thoughtful care can make a lasting difference in a child's life. Caring for children is not merely about treating illness; it is about nurturing growth, protecting potential, and shaping healthier futures.

There is a well-known saying, ***"It takes a whole village to raise a child."*** In medicine, that village extends far beyond the clinic walls. It includes families, communities, educators, nurses, doctors, allied health professionals, policymakers, and advocates; each playing a vital role in supporting a child's wellbeing. When this village stands united, care becomes comprehensive, compassionate, and sustainable.

This issue not only explores clinical insights and innovations, but also highlights parent sharing; powerful narratives that remind us of lived experiences, resilience, and the value of partnership in care.

As you read through this issue, we hope it gently reminds you that every role matters, and that your care, compassion, and commitment can make a meaningful difference in a child's life.

Together, let us continue offering big care to the little lives who trust us most.

Amelia Mohamad
Chief Editor

Diarrhoea in Children Under Five: What Parents and Caregivers Need to Know

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Deburra Peak Ngadan
Public Health Medicine Specialist

Diarrhoea is common among children under five, who are at greater risk of dehydration due to rapid fluid loss. Most cases can be safely managed at home when caregivers are aware of early symptoms and know what steps to take. The Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH), in line with the World Health Organization (WHO) IMCI guidelines, provides clear recommendations to support families in caring for young children with diarrhoea (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2019).

Prevention: What Parents and Caregivers Can Do:

- Practise frequent handwashing, especially before meals and after changing nappies.
- Ensure safe food handling, proper cooking, and correct storage.
- Provide only clean drinking water, preferably boiled or treated.
- Continue breastfeeding, which lowers the likelihood of infection.
- Keep feeding equipment thoroughly clean at all times.
- Ensure children receive all recommended vaccinations, particularly the rotavirus vaccine.

Managing Mild Dehydration at Home

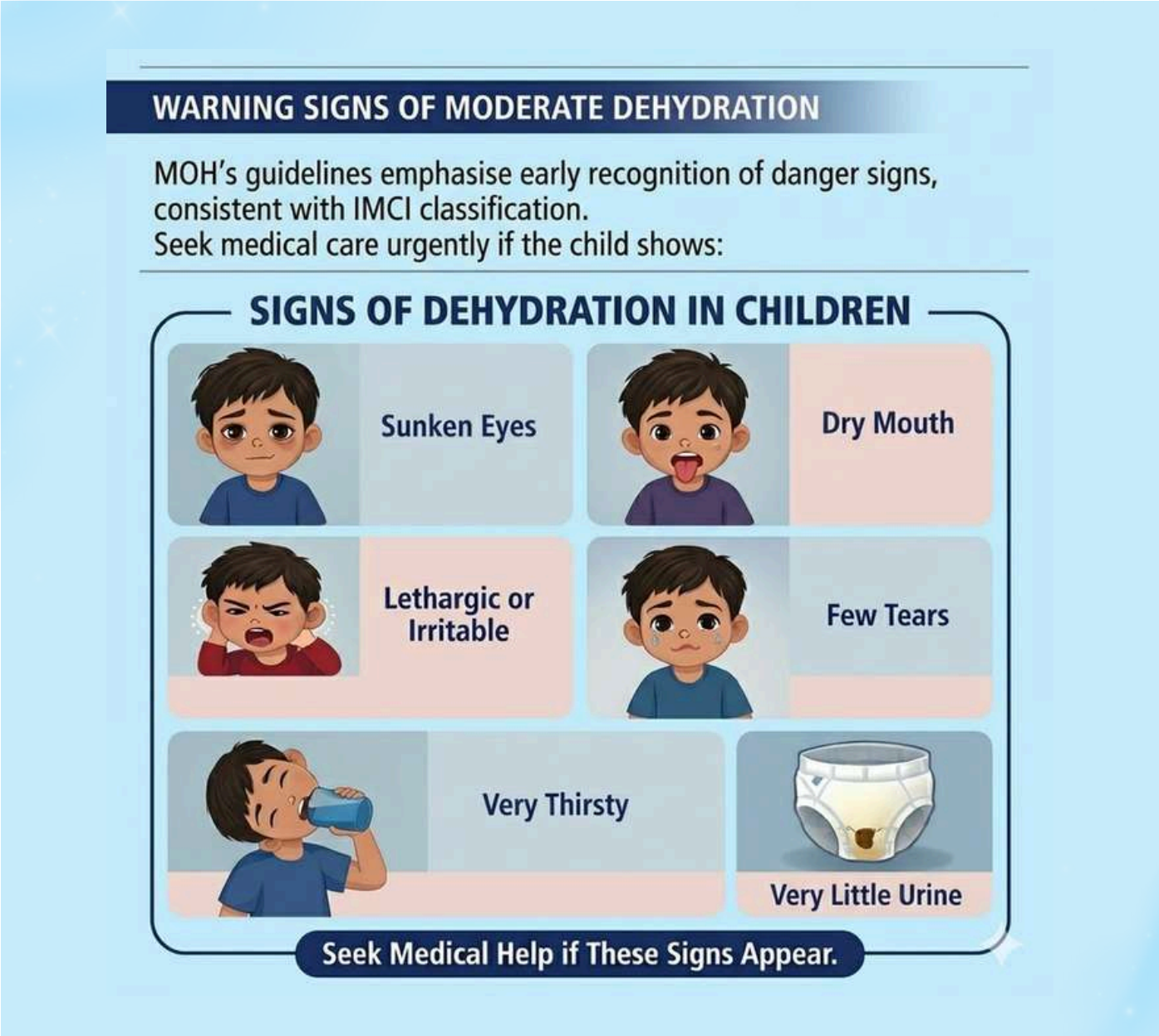
The Ministry of Health (MOH) emphasises oral rehydration therapy (ORT) as the key treatment for diarrhoea in children (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2019).

Caregivers should:

- Offer Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) in small, frequent sips.
- Continue normal feeding or breastfeeding.
- Provide zinc supplementation, which helps repair the gut lining, strengthens immunity, reduces stool output, and shortens the duration of illness (World Health Organization, 2014)
- Avoid sugary drinks, cordials, and herbal tonics.
- Monitor urine output, as fewer wet diapers may suggest worsening dehydration.

Why Zinc Helps: A Quick Insight

- Zinc supports faster recovery of the intestinal lining, reducing “leakiness” during diarrhoea (Park, 2025).
- A WHO-commissioned review in 2024 showed zinc shortens the duration of diarrhoea by an average of 13 hours (Ali et al., 2024).
- It also boosts immunity and helps prevent future episodes (Iqbal et al., 2025).
- Zinc is especially beneficial for malnourished children, who are more likely to be deficient (Park, 2025).



These signs often reflect 5–10% dehydration (Malaysian Paediatric Association, 2019)

When to Go to Hospital

Immediate medical care is required if a child has:

- Bloody diarrhoea, persistent vomiting, high fever, or IMCI danger signs (World Health Organization, 2014)
- If the child is alert, feeding well, passing urine normally, and generally active, home care is usually appropriate. However, when in doubt, seek medical attention early.

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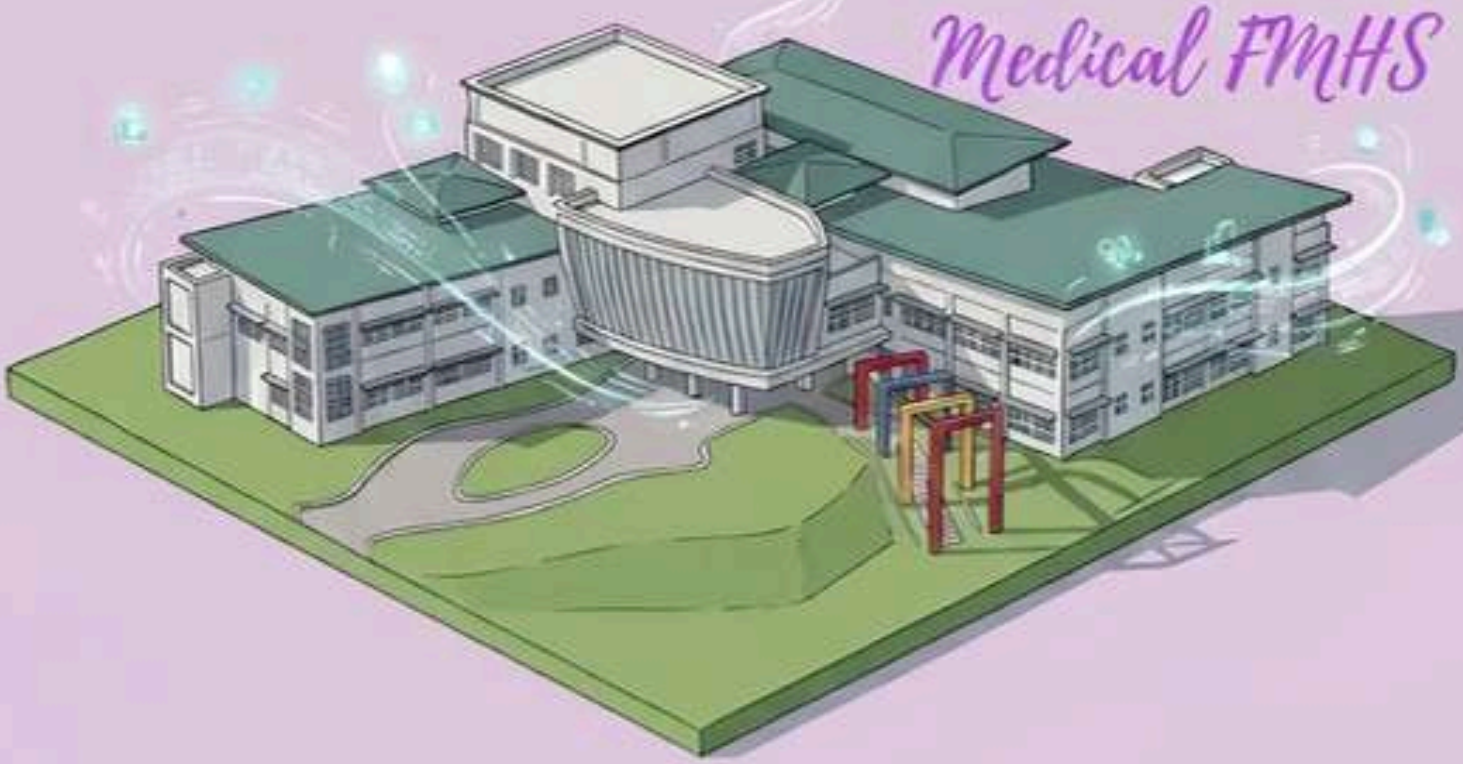
Medical FMHS



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