

## HEALTH LITERACY LESSON

# Safe Drinking Water at Home

Unsafe water is one of the most common causes of preventable illness, especially for children. A few simple habits can make a real difference.

## Signs water may be unsafe

- Cloudy or unusually discolored appearance
- An unusual smell or taste
- Coming from a source known to be contaminated, such as an open well near a latrine, floodwater, or a stagnant pond

## Ways to make water safer at home

- **Boiling:** bring water to a full, rolling boil for at least 1 minute. This kills most disease-causing germs.
- **Filtering:** a clean cloth folded several times can remove some sediment, though it does not remove germs. A proper water filter is more effective when available.
- **Solar disinfection:** in an emergency, filling a clear plastic bottle with water and leaving it in direct, strong sunlight for at least 6 hours can help disinfect it.

## Storing water safely

Keep treated water in a clean, covered container. A container with a narrow opening or a tap helps prevent hands or dirty cups from touching the water directly.

## Basic sanitation habits

Keep drinking water sources away from latrines, animal waste, and garbage, and wash storage containers regularly.

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This lesson is for general education and does not replace advice from a qualified health professional. If you are concerned about a symptom, please seek medical care.

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