

New Food Saves Lives, Could End Hunger



During the December holidays, many families and friends will gather around tables full of good food. But while many of us are fortunate to have more than enough to eat, there are people around the world who have very little food. In some poor countries, babies and children do not get the food they need. Many of those undernourished children will die. In parts of Niger, a country in West Africa, one child in five will die before reaching the age of five.

Some doctors think they might have found a solution to the hunger problem. They are fighting hunger in Niger and many other parts of the world with a new food called Plumpynut. Plumpynut is a paste that is a mix of peanut butter, powdered milk, powdered sugar, vegetable oil, vitamins, and minerals. Children like Plumpynut because it tastes sweet. Kids who are weak from hunger often get better and start to grow after eating Plumpynut for a few weeks.

NEWS WORD BOX

powdered medicine
nutrition exposed
undernourished cure
fortunate solution

One of the best things about Plumpynut is that it is easy to use. It comes in a foil pouch and it does not need to be cooked or kept cold. That is important because few people in poor countries have electricity.

Mothers in those countries cannot mix powdered milk with water because the water may not be safe to drink. And Plumpynut is easy for mothers to bring home. Doctors don't need to give children Plumpynut in hospitals where they might be exposed to sickness.

There is no real medicine in Plumpynut but many doctors who work in Africa say it is one of the "most important medicines" to come along in a long time. They say Plumpynut could be a "cure" for hunger. And it costs only \$1 a day for each child.

MORE FACTS ABOUT PLUMPYNUT

- One Plumpynut serving provides the nutrition of a glass of milk and a multivitamin.
- Each year, five million children die from hunger. That's one child every six seconds.

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

Some scientists say that Plumpynut is the most important food ever created. Do you agree with them? Tell why or why not.