

Children's Emergency Department

Fever or high temperature - parent/carer discharge information



Normal body temperature is around 37°C. Fever or a temperature is an abnormally high body temperature. This indicates that your child's body is fighting an infection. The body raises its temperature intentionally as part of its natural defence mechanism and this helps it deal with the infection faster. Viruses and bacteria cannot survive at high temperatures. Unless the temperature is very high (more than 38.5°C), it is not in itself dangerous, although it may make your child feel and look uncomfortable.

If you wish to check your child's temperature, then use a thermometer. Estimating the presence of a fever by touching the child's skin is unreliable, even though you may have seen it done before. If a child looks generally well and is eating, drinking, and behaving normally, it is unlikely that his/her raised temperature is worrying.

What should I do now?

- Make sure your child is given plenty of cool drinks and or ice-lollies taken in small frequent amounts to prevent dehydration
- Dress your child in light cotton pyjamas so that body heat can escape
- Keep the room cool at about 20°C
- Make sure you check your child during the night



Patient Information

What medication can I give my child / adolescent?

- Paracetamol and or ibuprofen (if applicable) to be given for pain or discomfort with a fever.

Paracetamol 4-6 hourly, last given at.....

Ibuprofen 6-8 hourly, last given at.....

When should I seek medical advice?

- If your child is less than 3 months old and has a fever.
- A very high temperature (more than 40°C) persists despite your efforts.
- Your child looks or acts very ill, develops persistent vomiting, neck stiffness, headache, discomfort when exposed to light, drowsiness, cold arms/ hands and legs/ feet, seizures, or a rash which does not fade when a glass is rolled over it.

For further advice/information:

- Call 111 (24 hours a day)
- Contact your GP

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 6934 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk

Document History

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