



TEMPERATURE CONTROL

Information for Parents



Most fevers in children over six months old are not serious, but medical advice should always be sought for fevers in babies less than six months old.

What Causes a High Temperature?

A high temperature (fever) is the body's natural response to infection.

Most infections are caused by minor illnesses/viruses which get better without specific treatment. Antibiotics do not help viral infections. Most children recover quickly without problems.

A small number of infections are caused by bacteria and may need antibiotics.

In a small proportion of children the fever may not improve or the child's health may worsen, which may be the sign of a more serious illness or infection e.g. meningitis, chest infection.

If you are concerned you may wish to have your child reviewed.

Continuing Care

Medicines are commonly used to reduce fever e.g. Paracetamol and Ibuprofen; these help to make your child feel more comfortable but they do not treat the cause of the fever.

The two medicines should not be given at the same time but if you give one and it doesn't help, you may consider using the other. It is not advisable to give Ibuprofen if your child is at risk of becoming dehydrated (not drinking well, vomiting, diarrhoea).

Give the medicines as directed on the bottle.

Most children appear miserable and unwell when their temperature is high, but perk up when the temperature comes down. If your child remains miserable and drowsy despite these measures you may wish to seek review with a doctor

Do not expose your child to cigarette smoke

- Take most of your child's clothes off so they can lose heat through the skin.
- Do not wrap your child in blankets.
- Offer your child regular drinks and look for signs of dehydration (dry mouth, no tears, not passed urine for 12 hours, unusually sleepy or sunken eyes).
- Do not worry if your child does not feel like eating but ensure that drinks given contain sugar e.g. cordial that's not sugar-free.

Seek further advice

If your child:

- Develops a non blanching rash (one that does not disappear with pressure). Has headaches, stiff neck or complains the light is hurting their eyes.
- Has a fit.
- Appears very unwell, or more sleepy than usual.
- Is struggling to breathe
- Still has a high temperature which is not settling after 48 hours
- Seems to be dehydrated

If your child is **under three months old** and has a high temperature, you should see a doctor.

For more detailed information:

<https://patient.info/health/feverhigh-temperature-in-children>

For advice – Call 111