

Fever in Children

You have been given this information leaflet as your child has been diagnosed with a fever.

A fever is a high temperature, generally over 37.5C (99.5F).

As a parent, it can be extremely worrying if your child has a high temperature. However it usually settles by itself without any specific treatment.

Causes of a high temperature

Most fevers are caused by viral illnesses or infections. The body's high temperature makes it more difficult for the viruses and bacteria that cause infections to survive.

Other conditions that can cause fevers include tonsillitis, urinary tract infections, ear infections and common childhood illnesses including chicken pox and whooping cough.

Treating a fever

If your child has a fever it is important to keep them hydrated by giving them plenty of cool water to drink. Babies should be given plenty of liquids such as breastmilk or formula. Even if your child is not thirsty encourage them to drink little and often, so that they are passing urine regularly.

You can try to reduce your child's temperature by keeping them cool, for example keeping their room cool or covering them with a lightweight sheet when sleeping.

Paracetamol (Calpol) and Ibuprofen (Nurofen) work to reduce fever as well as painkillers. They can be used at the same time or at regular intervals in order to reduce a temperature. Please follow the dosing instructions that come with the medication to find the correct dose and frequency for your child.

When to seek urgent medical advice

You should seek urgent medical advice from your GP or NHS 111 if your child:

- Is under three months old and has a temperature of 38°C or above
- Is between three and six months old and has a temperature of 39°C or above
- Is displaying signs of serious illness such as persistent vomiting, refusal to feed, floppiness or drowsiness

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Further Information

For further advice and information about your condition, please choose from the following:

- 'NHS Patient Choices' website: www.nhs.uk
- 'Making Lives Better' patient website: www.patient.info
- Telephone NHS 111
- Contact your General Practitioner

Contact details:

The James Cook University Hospital: 01642 850850
Marton Road, Middlesbrough, TS4 3BW

The Friarage: 01609 779911
Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 1JG

Redcar Primary Care Hospital: 01642 511000
West Dyke Road, Redcar, TS10 4NW

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Issue Date: March 2021 Review Date: March 2023

