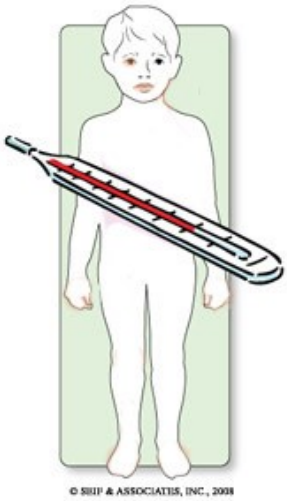
Taking Care of Your Child's Fever At Home

Parents often worry when their child has a fever. Usually, it is better to care for your child's fever at home. In an emergency room, your child can pick up germs from the other sick children. Also, your child will be calmer resting at home.



Depending on your child's age, temperatures can me measured in the rectum, mouth, ear or under the arm. Taking the temperature in the ear requires a special thermometer. Temperatures vary slightly in each place. It is important to tell your doctor how you took your child's temperature.

Fever is often the first sign of an infection. After the fever, your child could be sick with other symptoms such as:

- Runny nose.
- Sore throat.
- Watery poop (*diarrhea*).
- Throwing up.

Most of the time, the infection is caused by a virus. You should not check your child's temperature by feeling the forehead. This **does not** tell you how high the temperature is. Use a thermometer. This can be a digital or ear thermometer.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS A FEVER:

- Make sure your child drinks lots of liquids. They should drink fluids that have sugar or salt in them. If your child is less than 2 years old, give electrolyte replacement fluids such as an oral rehydration solutions and juices. If your child is more than 2 years old, you can give liquids such as sports drinks, juices and popsicles.
- Let your child move around as much as they feel like. Also, let them rest when they want.
- **Do not** wrap up your child too much. Chills are not a sign of being cold. They are part of the fever.
- Give your child a bath in warm water. Your child will feel better.
- Let your child go to school when the fever is gone.

Only take medicine as directed by your doctor. The amount of medicine you need to give depends on your child's weight. It is important to look at the chart on the medicine or below.

GET HELP RIGHT AWAY IF YOUR CHILD:

- Your child has a temperature by mouth above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**
- Is breathing fast and the skin between the ribs is pulling in.
- Leans forward to breathe or has grunting breathing.
- Has an ear ache.
- Gets a stiff neck.
- Becomes fussy or floppy.
- Develops bad belly pain.
- Cannot stop vomiting or has diarrhea or signs of dehydration.
- Has pain when peeing (*urinating*).
- Looks ill and has no energy.
- Has a change in skin color or rash.

- Is not drinking anything at all.

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