



Fever in children

Fever is a sign of another problem. Your child may have an infection. Exercise, hot weather, and shots like DTaP and MMR can also make your child's temperature go up.



HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOUR CHILD HAS A FEVER?

- Your child's chest or forehead may feel hot.
- Your child may sweat or feel sick.
- Your child's temperature is:
 - Higher than 100°F by mouth
 - Higher than 100.4°F by rectum, ear or forehead
 - Higher than 99.1°F under the armpit



A thermometer measures temperature. There are many kinds of thermometers:

- Pacifier thermometers. These are for children 3 months old to 2 years old.
- Digital thermometers run on batteries. They are good and work in less than 30 seconds. (Make sure the batteries are good.)
- Temperature strips go on the forehead. They are easy to use, but do not give a good temperature reading.
- Ear thermometers work in 2 seconds or less. They are as good as oral thermometers, but they cost more. They are appropriate for those aged 6 months and older.

You may not need to treat your child's fever if it isn't high and he or she feels OK. But you should treat your child's fever if it is high and your child feels bad or the fever makes it hard for your child to drink, eat, sleep, or do normal things.

TRIAGE QUESTIONS

With a fever, does the child have any of these signs?

- Seizure
- Hard time breathing or very fast breathing
- Can't be roused
- Very bad wheezing

NO
↓

YES ➡ **GET EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE**

With a high fever, does the child have 1 or more of these signs of meningitis?

- Stiff neck
- Very bad headache that lasts
- Acts very sleepy and/or strange
- Purple or red, bumpy skin rash that does not fade when you press on the skin

NO
↓

YES ➡ **GET EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE**

Does your child have any of these signs of dehydration?

- Acts confused
- Dry diaper for more than 3 hours in a baby
- No urine for 6 or more hours in a child
- Sunken eyes
- Crying with no tears
- Dry mouth and dry skin

NO
↓

YES ➡ **GET EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE**

Is the fever 100.4°F or higher in a baby less than 3 months old? Is it 104°F or higher in a child between 3 months and 3 years old?

NO
↓

YES ➡ **GET EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE**

CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE



TRIAGE QUESTIONS, *CONTINUED*



- With a fever, does the child have any of these problems?
- Ear pain that lasts or tugging at the ear
 - Pain, redness, or swelling anywhere on the body
 - Sore throat. Green or yellow mucus that drains from the nose, ears, or throat
 - Pain or burning when passing urine. Passing urine often.

NO
↓

YES ► **SEE DOCTOR**



- In a baby less than 3 months old, is the fever 100.4°F? Is it over 102.2°F in a child between 3 months and 3 years old or higher than 104°F in a child 3 years of age and older?

NO
↓

YES ► **SEE DOCTOR**



- With a fever, has your child had an operation recently? Or does he or she have any of these health problems?
- Asthma
 - Kidney disease
 - Cancer
 - Diabetes
 - A history of seizures when they have a fever

NO
↓

YES ► **CALL DOCTOR**



- Did the fever go away for more than a day, then come back? Did your child get the fever after a visit to a different country? Or did he or she just have a DTaP, or MMR shot and is feeling dizzy?

NO
↓

YES ► **CALL DOCTOR**



- Does a child age 3 years and older have a fever of 102.2°F and up to 104°F?

NO
↓

YES ► **CALL DOCTOR**



USE SELF-CARE



SELF-CARE

- Make sure your child drinks a lot of cool fluids, such as water and diluted fruit juice.
- Dress your child in light clothing.
- Have your child rest.
- For a high fever, sponge your child with lukewarm water. Don't use rubbing alcohol. Don't let your child shower. Showering can make the fever go up.
- Give your child acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Make sure you give the right kind and dose for their weight. (**Note:** Do not give aspirin. Aspirin and other medicines that have salicylates have been linked to Reye's Syndrome.)

A fever can occur with other health problems. These may include:

- Chickenpox
- Coughs
- Croup
- Cuts, Scrapes & Punctures
- Diarrhea
- Earaches
- Flu
- Headaches
- Seizures
- Sore Throats
- Swollen Glands
- Wheezing