



Self-care Information

Fever in Children

Tips on how to manage a fever in children

“Supporting you to look after your family”

Key Points:

- Fever is a high temperature of 38°C or more.
- Give plenty of fluids.
- Give paracetamol or ibuprofen if they are distressed or unwell.
- Avoid over or under dressing your feverish child.

What does a fever look like?

- Fever is a raised body temperature above the normal, which usually suggests an infection.
- A normal temperature in babies and children is about 36.4°C, but this can vary from child to child.
- Fever is a high temperature of 38°C or more.

If your child has a high temperature, they might:

- Feel hotter than usual when you touch their back or chest.
- Feel sweaty.
- Look or feel unwell.
- Have a seizure or fit, called a febrile seizure.

- **Fever is common in young children.** It is a natural response to help the body fight infection. The temperature usually returns to normal after 1 to 4 days.
- **Use a digital thermometer**, which you can buy from pharmacies and supermarkets, to take your child's temperature.
 - If your child has just had a bath or been wrapped in a blanket, their temperature may be higher for a short time. Wait a few minutes then try again.

You could try...

- ✓ Giving them plenty of fluids.
- ✓ Keeping them away from nursery or school while they have the fever.
- ✓ Giving them paracetamol or ibuprofen if they are unwell. Always follow the instructions on the medicine packaging.



Do not...

- ✗ Give aspirin to children under the age of 16 years of age.
- ✗ Give paracetamol to a child under 2 months.
- ✗ Give ibuprofen to a child who is under 3 months, weighs under 5kg, has chickenpox or is dehydrated.
- ✗ Give ibuprofen to children with asthma unless recommended by a doctor.
- ✗ Undress your child or sponge them to cool them – a high temperature is a natural and healthy response to infection.
- ✗ Cover them up with too many clothes.

When to seek advice

Contact NHS 111 or your GP if your child's health gets worse or if you have concerns about looking after your child at home. Also seek medical advice straight away if you notice any of the following:

- If the child is under 6 months old and has a temperature of 38°C or higher, or you think they have a high fever.
- If there are other signs of illness, such as rash, as well as a high temperature.
- If the high temperature has lasted for more than 5 days.
- If the child is not eating or drinking or is unwell and you're worried.
- If the high temperature that doesn't come down with paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- If the child is showing signs of dehydration such as nappies that aren't very wet, sunken eyes, and no tears when they're crying.

Here are some links to further information:

Look at the NHS Website [High temperature \(fever\) in children - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-temperature-in-children/)
For a Patient Website: [Fever in Children \(High Temperature\): Causes and Treatment \(patient.info\)](https://patient.info/conditions/fever-in-children-high-temperature-causes-and-treatment/)

For more advice visit your local pharmacy

