

When Should I Seek Medical Advice?

- If you are worried about your child in any way.
- If you feel your child is getting worse.
- If your child is vomiting and refusing to drink.
- If your child develops a rash that will not go away when you press on the skin.
- If your child has problems with breathing.
- If your child is in pain.
- If antipyretics have been given for some time and the fever continues.



INFORMATION ON FEBRILE CONVULSIONS

A febrile convulsion is a common medical condition in children but can be a very frightening experience for parents/carers.

Children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years can develop a febrile convulsion. One in 25 of children will have a febrile convulsion.

Simple febrile convulsions are not harmful to the child and do not cause brain damage.

The cause of a febrile convulsion is unknown but it usually occurs when the child has an illness and a high temperature.

Giving your child Paracetamol and/or Ibuprofen regularly has not been found to prevent febrile convulsions. However you should treat your child's fever as described in this leaflet.

If your child has a febrile convulsion at home you should seek medical advice.

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PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET



YOUR CHILD WITH A FEVER

A Guide for Parents/Carers



THE ADELAIDE & MEATH
HOSPITAL, DUBLIN
INCORPORATING THE NATIONAL
CHILDRENS HOSPITAL

Statement of Values

Respect - Caring -
Openness - Partnership -
Teamwork Fairness &
Equality

What is a Fever?

A fever is present in a child when the temperature rises above 38 degrees Celsius (°C) or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (°F). A fever occurs mainly as a result of a viral illness, but can also be caused by a bacterial infection. It is the body's response to fighting an infection and allows a parent/carer to see that their child is sick.

When Should I Check my Child's Temperature?

Check your child's temperature using a thermometer.

• You may want to take your child's temperature if any one of the following is present:

- your child is generally unwell
- his/her body feels hot or hands and feet are cold
- he/she is irritable and crying
- he/she is vomiting and/or has diarrhoea
- he/she is complaining of pain
- he/she is sleepy or drowsy

If your baby is under 3 months and has a fever of 38°C/100.4°F or higher, you should take him/her to see a doctor.

Controlling a Fever at Home

- The child's clothing should be loose and comfortable. Leave a light outer layer of clothing on which will help to reduce shivering.
- Tepid sponging, baths and fans are not recommended as they do not lower the temperature. Tepid sponging or bathing your child may make him/her more comfortable but will not have any effect on lowering the fever.
- Give your child frequent small drinks. Breastmilk is best for babies otherwise formula can be given.



Antipyretics (Medicines for the Fever)

If your child is well and happy there is no need to treat a fever with antipyretics. However if the fever is above 38°C/100.4°F and your child is miserable you should give your child medicine for the fever.

Paracetamol

The usual choice of medication to relieve a fever and provide comfort for your child is **Paracetamol**, also called **Calpol** or **Paralink**.

If your child is vomiting and not able to take medicine by mouth **Paracetamol Suppositories** can be given rectally.

Follow the dose instructions on the medicine bottle or box.

No more than 4 doses should be given in 24 hours

Ibuprofen

Ibuprofen, also called **Nurofen for Children** or **Proven**, can also be used to relieve a child's fever and distress. It may be given on its own or with Paracetamol.

Follow the dose instructions on the medicine bottle or box.

No more than 3 doses should be given in 24 hours.