



Accident & Emergency Department

Fever

Information for parents and carers

This fact sheet aims to give you some information about fever, how a simple fever can be managed at home and when a medical opinion should be sought.

What is a fever?

A fever is a body temperature which is higher than normal. This is a natural response and helps the body to fight against infections.

What is a normal temperature?

A normal temperature is about 37°C when taken orally (by mouth). Temperatures taken rectally (by rectum) usually run 1° higher than those taken orally.

When should I try to lower my child's temperature?

Fevers are a sign that the body is fighting an infection. The main reason to treat your child is to make him or her feel better. When your child is irritable or cranky, you may want to give him or her some medicine.

Simple fevers can be managed at home by:

- removing layers of clothing
- encourage your child to drink cool drinks.
- medication may be given - paracetamol (Calpol) and /or ibuprofen (Brufen / Nurofen)
- nurse your child in a cot rather than in arms.

If you take these measures you may make your child more comfortable.

Why not use aspirin to lower my child's fever?

In rare cases aspirin can cause Reye's syndrome in children who have the flu or the chickenpox. Reye's syndrome is a serious illness that can lead to death. Because it may be hard to tell if your child has one of these infections, it's best not to use aspirin.

When should I get a medical opinion?

If your child:

- is unusually sleepy
- will not drink fluids
- has an unusual rash, a headache, neck stiffness or breathing difficulties.

Help and Advice

Can be obtained from **NHS 111 Service**.

This fact sheet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust
Eaton Road
Liverpool
L12 2AP

Tel: 0151 228 4811
www.alderhey.nhs.uk

A & E/4/F/ 06 © Alder Hey 2015 Date of next review: March 2018 PIAG 64