

Fever in children

We have examined your child thoroughly and feel they are ready to be cared for at home rather than in hospital, but if you become more worried than when you previously sought advice, or you are concerned that you are unable to look after your child at home because:

- their health is getting worse
- they have a fit
- they develop a rash that does not disappear with pressure (see the ‘tumbler test’ below]
- the fever lasts longer than 5 days
- you are concerned that they are dehydrated

Then phone one of these numbers for medical advice:

CONQUEST HOSPITAL		EASTBOURNE DGH	
Kipling Ward	01424 758039	Friston SSPAU	01323 414946
Kipling SSPAU	01424 757507		01323 435766

Or in an Emergency Dial 999 for an ambulance.

What to do when your child has a fever

- offer them regular drinks (if you are breastfeeding then breast milk is best)
- check for signs that your child may be dehydrated (dry mouth, no tears, sunken eyes, sunken fontanelle – the soft spot on a baby’s head). If you notice any of these signs seek further advice (as above).
- check your child for rashes and know how to look for and identify a non-blanching rash (a rash that does not disappear with pressure) as that could be a sign of serious illness (see ‘tumbler test’ section)
- check on your child during the night
- do not try to reduce your child’s fever with medicine, but do use medicines (see medicines section) if your child is distressed or uncomfortable
- keep your child away from school or nursery while they have a fever and notify them of your child’s absence
- return a urine sample if one has been requested, ideally within 24 hours

Fever and medicines

Fever is a natural and healthy response to infection, so do not try to reduce your child’s fever by over or under dressing them, or by sponging them with water.

Although it is not necessary to treat fever, there are two medicines that can be used to treat distress caused by fever and being unwell. These are ibuprofen and paracetamol and they may make your child feel better. They are equally effective, so you should start with one and only use the other if the first has not worked, but you should not give both at the same time.

Read the instructions carefully as these medicines come in different strengths, and they may also be contained in other products that your pharmacist sells. If you have any doubt you should tell the pharmacist what you are currently using. Although both are very safe when used correctly, they may be harmful if too large a dose is given or if given too often.

Rashes and the tumbler test

Do the 'tumbler test' if your child has a rash. Press a glass tumbler firmly against the rash. If you can see the spots through the glass and they do not fade, this is called a 'non-blanching rash'. If this rash is present seek medical advice immediately. This can be a sign that your child has meningitis and or septicaemia [an infection in the blood]

If the spots fade when the glass is rolled over them, the rash is probably not serious, but keep checking, it can develop into a rash that does not fade.

Rashes are harder to see on dark skin so look for rashes on paler areas, such as palms of the hands, soles of the feet, tummy and inside the eyelids.

If you are worried that your child's health is getting worse, seek further medical advice – **do not wait for a rash to appear**



(Photo courtesy of the Meningitis Research Foundation)

Sources of information

NHS Choices Website www.nhs.uk/aboutNHSChoices.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Evidence –www.nice.org.uk/Guidance

Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) – details below.

Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available in the wards for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: (01424) 755255 - ask for the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Email: esh-tr.accessibleinformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

Written by: J Sumner

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Acute Consultant Paediatricians

Children's Ward Matrons

Head of Nursing for Women's and Children's Division

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