



Kids Health Partners

9631 Gross Point Road, Suite 102

Skokie, Illinois 60076

(847) 677-7250

Fever

Fever is a very common symptom in children. It is part of your child's normal response to infections. Fever is defined as axillary (under the arm) temperature of 100.5 °F. Oral (mouth) and rectal temperatures are generally a bit higher than axillary temperature. We recommend that you use a digital thermometer, and measure the temperature under the arm or orally first. Rectal temperature is the most accurate method for infants less than two months old. Ear (otic) thermometers are expensive and often inaccurate, so we do not recommend them.

Fever occurs when your child's immune system is fighting an infection. Most fevers are caused by viral illnesses, and will resolve without any treatment in a few days. Bacterial infections, which sometimes must be treated with antibiotics, also cause fever. Both viral and bacterial infections can cause high fever, so the height of the fever does not really help us decide how serious the illness is. Children with minor illnesses may be somewhat tired and crabby, but generally behave normally. They may not eat much food, but should be drinking fluids well. **If your child is less than 2 months old, lethargic, confused or irritable, not drinking fluids well, not urinating, or has a rash, these can be signs of a more serious illness. Please call our office if your child has any of these signs, or if your child has fever for more than 3 days.** If you are concerned about fever in your child, we are, of course, happy to speak with you at any point during your child's illness.

Fever is a normal response to illness, and is not harmful to your child's body. Even fevers as high as 106°F are not dangerous. Because fever is not dangerous, the only reason to treat fever is to make your child feel better. If your child has a fever but seems to be comfortable or is asleep, it is not necessary to treat the fever. Acetaminophen and ibuprofen are medications that reduce fever, and are safe for children older than 2 months. **Never give fever medications to an infant less than 2 months of age before speaking with our office.** Dosing charts can be found on the reverse side. Your child's dose is based on his or her weight. Both acetaminophen and ibuprofen act on the brain to reduce the body temperature. Because both drugs treat fever in the same way, it is not necessary and may be dangerous to use both at the same time. Pick the medication that seems to work best for your child, and use it as needed during your child's illness. Both drugs are safe for most children. Ibuprofen offers the advantage of lasting a little longer (6-8 hours rather than 4 hours for acetaminophen). Acetaminophen is safer in children who are dehydrated, and in those with head injuries or bleeding problems. **Aspirin should never be used for fever treatment in children.** Placing your child in a lukewarm bath after giving the fever medication may help the fever come down more quickly.

Feel free to call us if you have additional questions about fever in your child.

Acetaminophen dosing

The following dosing schedule applies to all forms of acetaminophen, including brand names such as Tylenol, Tempra and generic preparations. Dosage is based on your child’s weight. Please be aware that some over-the-counter cough and cold preparations contain acetaminophen. Use of these products in addition to acetaminophen may result in an overdose. We recommend that if you give cold medications to your child you choose products that do NOT contain fever or pain medication. You can then give the fever medication separately and avoid the potential for overdose. Note that suppository doses are slightly higher because the medicine is not absorbed as well rectally.

Acetaminophen can be given as often as every four hours.

Weight	Dose	Infant drops 80 mg/ml	Children's 160mg/5ml	80 mg chew	160mg cap/chew	120 mg suppository	325 mg suppository
9-11 lb	60mg	3/4 dropper (0.6ml)	1/3 tsp (1.8ml)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
12-17lb	80mg	1 dropper (0.8ml)	1/2 tsp (2.5ml)	N/A	N/A	1	N/A
18-22lb	120mg	1 1/2 dropper (1.2ml)	3/4 tsp (3.75ml)	1 1/2 tablets	N/A	1 1/2	N/A
23-26lb	160mg	2 droppers (1.6ml)	1 tsp (5ml)	2 tablets	1 tablet	2	N/A
27-32lb	200mg	2 1/2 droppers (2ml)	1 1/4 tsp (6.25ml)	2 1/2 tablets		2	N/A
33-37lb	240mg	3 droppers (2.4ml)	1 1/2 tsp (7.5ml)	3 tablets	1 1/2 tablets	2	N/A
38-42lb	280mg	Use liquid or tablets	1 3/4 tsp (8.75ml)	4 tablets	2 tablets		1
43-53lb	320mg		2 tsp (10ml)	4 tablets	2 tablets		1
54-64lb	400mg		2 1/2 tsp (12.5ml)	5 tablets	2 1/2 tablets		1 1/2
65-75lb	480mg		3 tsp (15ml)	6 tablets	3 tablets		1 1/2
76-86lb	560mg		3 1/2 tsp (17.5ml)	7 tablets	3 1/2 tablets		2
87-95lb	640mg		4 tsp (20ml)	8 tablets	4 tablets		2
>95 lb		USE	ADULT	DOSAGE			

Ibuprofen dosing

Brand names for ibuprofen include Motrin and Advil. Read the label of all over the counter medications to make sure that cold medications do not contain acetaminophen or ibuprofen to avoid giving these medications twice. **Ibuprofen can be given as often as every 6-8 hours.** Use acetaminophen instead of ibuprofen if your child is dehydrated.

Weight	Dose	Drops 50mg/1.25ml	Children's 100mg/5ml	Chewable 50mg	Junior Strength 100mg
11-16 lb	50mg	1 dropper (1.25ml)	1/2 tsp (2.5ml)	N/A	N/A
17-21lb	75mg	1 1/2 dropper (1.875ml)	3/4 tsp (3.75ml)	N/A	N/A
22-26 lb	100mg	2 droppers (2.5 ml)	1 tsp (5ml)	2 tablets	1 tablet
27-32 lb	125mg	Use liquid or tablets	1 1/4 tsp (6.25ml)	2 1/2 tablets	
33-37 lb	150mg		1 1/2 tsp (7.5ml)	3 tablets	1 1/2 tablets
38-42 lb	175mg		1 3/4 tsp (8.75ml)	3 1/2 tablets	
43-53 lb	200mg		2 tsp (10ml)	4 tablets	2 tablets
54-64 lb	250mg		2 1/2 tsp (12.5ml)	5 tablets	2 1/2 tablets
65-75 lb	300mg		3 tsp (15ml)	6 tablets	3 tablets
76-86 lb	350mg		3 1/2 tsp	7 tablets	3 1/2 tablets
87-95 lb	400mg		4 tsp	8 tablets	4 tablets
>95 lb			Give	Adult	Dose