

FEVER

Although it can be frightening when a child's temperature rises, fever itself causes no harm and can actually be a good thing — it's often the body's way of fighting infections.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may have a fever if he or she is:

- ◆ fussy
- ◆ flushed
- ◆ uncomfortable
- ◆ sweaty
- ◆ warm to touch

What to Do

It's best to keep a child home from school or childcare until the temperature has been normal (usually below 100°F or 37.7°C) for at least 24 hours without using medicine to bring it down. If your child is uncomfortable, here are some ways to relieve symptoms:

- ◆ Offer plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.
- ◆ Give acetaminophen or ibuprofen based on package recommendations. Do not give aspirin.
- ◆ Never use rubbing alcohol or cold baths to bring the fever down.
- ◆ Dress your child in lightweight clothing and cover with a light sheet or blanket.
- ◆ Let your child eat what he or she wants, and don't force eating if your child doesn't feel like it.
- ◆ If your child also is vomiting and/or has diarrhea, ask the doctor if you should give a children's electrolyte (rehydration) solution.
- ◆ Make sure your child gets plenty of rest.

When to Seek Medical Care:

- ◆ If an infant is younger than 3 months old and has a temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher
- ◆ If an older child has a fever and
 - appears sick
 - develops a rash
 - has persistent diarrhea or repeated vomiting
 - has signs of dehydration (urinating less than usual, not having tears when crying, less alert and less active than usual)
 - has recurring fever for 5 days
 - has a chronic medical problem like sickle cell disease, heart problems, cancer, or lupus

Fever is often unavoidable. The key is to make your child as comfortable as possible until the fever passes, and get medical treatment when necessary.

Reference:

http://kidshealth.org/PageManager.jsp?dn=KidsHealth&lic=1&ps=107&cat_id=20221&article_set=74035#cat20221

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