

Fever advice for children and young people in Gloucestershire

What is a fever?

A fever is an increase in body temperature. This in itself is not dangerous. Your child's body temperature is normally between 36°C and 37°C, variations between 0.5 and 1 degree are common.

Fever in children are not uncommon. This leaflet provides advice on when to seek help and on what you can do to help your child feel better. Often the fever lasts for a short duration and many children can be cared for at home if the child continues to drink, remains alert and does not develop any worrying symptoms.

However, if you are worried or your child is getting worse with warning symptoms as listed in this leaflet, then you should seek the advice of a healthcare professional.

Working out the cause of the fever

If you are talking to a healthcare professional on the telephone, they will ask you questions about your child's health and symptoms. This will help them to decide if your child is best cared for at home or needs to see a healthcare professional face to face.

Sometimes your healthcare professional will not find a reason for your child's fever, even after a full examination. If your child is otherwise looking well, then treatment may not be necessary.

Most children can be safely cared for at home if otherwise well. Your healthcare professional may decide that your child needs a follow-up appointment. They will give you information on how to look for symptoms that may suggest more serious illnesses and how to get further help if they occur.

Looking after your feverish child

- Give your child plenty of drinks e.g. water or squash. If you are breastfeeding then continue as breast milk is best. Give babies smaller but more frequent feeds to help keep them hydrated.

- Do not worry about food if your child does not feel like eating but encourage them to drink more fluids.
- Look for signs of dehydration such as a dry mouth, lack of tears, sunken eyes, sunken fontanelle – the soft spot on your baby's head, passing less amounts of urine.
- Children with a fever should not be over or underdressed. If your child is shivering or sweating a lot, change the amount of clothes they are wearing.
- Physical methods of cooling your child such as fanning them, cold bathing and tepid sponging can cause discomfort and are not advised.
- It is not necessary to use medicines to treat your child's fever but if your child is distressed, you can help them feel better by giving them medicines like paracetamol or Ibuprofen. These medicines should not be given together. Always follow the instructions on the bottle to avoid overdosing your child. These medicines can make your child feel more comfortable but they do not treat the cause of the temperature.
- Check on your child regularly, including during the night, especially if your child is under 6 months old as they are at higher risk of serious infection.
- Keep your child away from nursery or school whilst they have a fever.

The tumbler test

- If a rash appears, do the tumbler test. Press a glass tumbler firmly against the rash. If you can see 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 to rule out serious infection. The rash is harder to see on dark skin so check paler areas such as the palms of hands and soles of feet.

This guide will help you to select the right service to contact. You need to regularly check your child and follow the advice below:

- If your child becomes unresponsive
- If your child becomes blue
- If your child is finding it hard to breathe
- If your child has a fit
- If your child develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (see the tumbler test)

You need urgent help please phone 999 or go straight to the nearest Accident and Emergency Dept.

- If your child's health gets worse or if you are worried
- If your child has signs of dehydration including dry mouth, no tears, sunken eyes, sunken fontanelle (soft spot on the baby's head), drowsiness and seems generally unwell
- The temperature lasts more than 5 days and your child has not seen a health care professional
- If your child is less than 6 months old

You need to see a nurse or doctor today. Please ring your surgery/health visitor/ community nurse/Gloucester Health Access Centre or contact NHS111 by dialling 111 for access to the Out of Hours GP service.

If you have concerns about looking after your child at home

**If you need advice
please contact NHS 111
Please phone 111**



To discuss receiving this information in large print or Braille please ring **0800 015 1548**.

To discuss receiving this information in other formats please contact:

এই তথ্য অন্য ফর্মাটে পেতে আলোচনার জন্য দয়া করে যোগাযোগ করুন
如需以其他格式接收此信息，请联系

V případě, že potřebujete obdržet tuto informaci v jiném formátu, kontaktujte prosím

আ মাহীতী বীজা ডিরমেটসমাং মণাবানী খর্খা করবামাটে কৃপাকরী সংপর্ক করি

Aby uzyskać te informacje w innych formatach, prosimy o kontakt

По вопросам получения информации в других форматах просим обращаться

Ak si želáte získať túto informáciu v inom formáte, kontaktujte prosím

**FREEPOST RRYY-KSGT-AGBR,
PALS,
NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning
Group, Sanger House, 5220 Valiant Court,
Gloucester Business Park, Gloucester GL3 4FE
0800 015 1548**

Useful numbers

GP Surgery

Health Visitor

GP Out of Hours Service: Appointments allocated and booked directly via the NHS 111 service.

(Open from 6.30pm to 8am on weekdays and all day and all night on weekends and bank holidays)

Gloucester Health Access Centre: 01452 336290

(Open from 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week including bank holidays)

NHS 111: Dial 111 (24 hour telephone service)

For an electronic copy of this leaflet please contact Children's Commissioning Team on 0300 4211817.

November 2013

(GDH3204)