

HUNTINGTON PLAZA PEDIATRIC GROUP

FEVER

What is fever?

- Fever is your body's normal reaction to an infection – it is a good thing
- Fever is a temperature of greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit in children under 3 months
- Fever is a temperature greater than 101 degrees in children older than 3 months of age.
- A temperature less than 100.4 is normal and does not need to be treated.

What is the best way to take a temperature?

- Rectal temperatures are the most accurate and should always be used in babies under 3 months
- An underarm temperature in children greater than 3 months of age may be used. You do not need to add or subtract a degree.
- Ear thermometers are notoriously inaccurate.
- Tactile (touch) fever is the impression that your child has a fever because s/he feels hot to the touch. Checking a fever this way is more accurate than we used to think. But for children less than 6 months of age, we always have to take the temperature with a thermometer. Also, please take the temperature if you are going to call your doctor.

Should I be afraid of a fever? NO!!

- Fever will not cause brain damage and will not hurt your child whether it is 101 or 104. Remember, fever is a good thing. It is your body fighting an infection.
- How your child looks and feels is more important than the number on the thermometer. Bring the fever down, and then assess how your child is feeling.

Why should I treat a fever?

- While your child has a fever, they may feel achy and lethargic.
- Treating the fever may make your child feel better in the interim, although it will not make the infection or the fever go away.

What medicines can I use to treat a fever?

- Tylenol is the brand name for acetaminophen
- Motrin and Advil are brand names for ibuprofen
- Children less than 6 months of age can be given acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 4 hours as needed.
- Children over 6 months of age can be give Tylenol every 4 hours or Ibuprofen (Motrin/Advil) every 6 hours as needed.
- Do not give children under 3 months of age any medicine without first talking to your pediatrician.
- These medicines should only be given when your child actually has a fever.
- Tylenol and Ibuprofen take approximately 30 minutes to work. Give the medicine time to work.
- Tylenol and Motrin/Advil may only lower the fever by 1-2 degrees.
- AVOID aspirin – children <21 years old should never take aspirin because taking aspirin during a viral infection has been linked to a severe liver illness called Reye's Syndrome.

Call our office if:

- Any child less than 3 months of age has a fever
- Fever persists longer than 72 hours
- Fever does not respond to Tylenol or ibuprofen
- Fever greater or equal to 105
- your child looks or acts very sick