



## Emergency Department Parent/ Carer Information on Caring for a Child with a Fever

Many fevers are caused by a viral illness which should disappear in two to three days. A fever is a temperature above the normal body temperature.

Normal Body Temperature = 36.7 – 37.5°C (98-99°F)

A high temperature is not harmful, it is the cause of the temperature that is important. Children recover quickly from most childhood illnesses but sometimes they may become more ill within a few hours.

If a child is not improving it is important that they are seen and examined by a doctor. If your child is less than 3 months old and has a high temperature you should bring your child to the doctor straight away.

### How will I know if my child has a High Temperature?

A thermometer should be used to measure your child's temperature. This can be purchased at a local pharmacy. A digital thermometer is easy to use, especially under the arm.

### What should I do if my child develops a High Temperature?

- Keep the room cool
- Remove excess clothing
- Give cool drinks (small amounts and often) or if breast feeding continue to feed
- Remove excess clothing.
- Do not use fans, cold baths or tepid sponges. This will cause the child to start shivering which will increase their temperature

- Paracetamol/Ibuprofen will help reduce the fever and make your child more comfortable. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to make sure that you give the right amount for your child's age. If in doubt always ask your Pharmacist. Children with asthma or gastrointestinal complaints should only take Ibuprofen under medical advice.
- Always check your child at frequent intervals. At night you should sleep in the same room as your child. It is advisable not to put your infant in your bed.
- A fever is a symptom of illness. It is important to see what illness is causing it. Most will be viral illnesses but you should contact your GP / Out of Hours GP service (1850 22 44 77). The Emergency Department is also open if your child is very ill or if you cannot access the other services.

**Parents/Carers should also contact a doctor if:**

- ➔ Your child has a fit
- ➔ Your child is getting worse rather than better over time
- ➔ Your child is vomiting or refusing to drink
- ➔ Your child is complaining of a stiff neck or light hurting their eyes
- ➔ Your child is not making eye contact
- ➔ Your child is having problems with breathing
- ➔ You are more worried than when you last had your child seen by a doctor
- ➔ You as a parent/carer are concerned/distressed that you are unable to look after your child.

**Please remember to wash your hands or use hand gel when visiting the Hospital**

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The information contained in this leaflet is correct at time of print