

Title: Does my child have a fever?

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Abstract: Fever is a common problem in children that causes parents a great deal of distress. It is the body's natural response to fight sickness but can also be a sign of a serious infection. This pamphlet describes fever in children, its diagnosis, and how it can be treated at home.

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Does my child have a fever?



How can fever be determined at home and what does it mean if my child has a fever or feels hot?

Patrick Horst

What is a fever?

Fever usually happens because a child is sick. It is defined as a temperature above 100.4 degrees F. When they have a fever, a child can feel goosebumps or a cold sensation commonly referred to as chills. When the fever is breaking, a child may feel hot and have the sweats. Fever and chills commonly occur together.

Is a fever harmful for my child?

Fever is *not harmful*. It is the body's natural response to fight sickness. Because of this, it can be a good thing when we are sick. Fever cannot cause brain damage. But, fever can be uncomfortable. Discomfort is one reason to treat fever. If the fever is uncomfortable, it can be treated with Tylenol.

How do I tell if my child has a fever?

The best method is to measure a child's temperature using a thermometer. There are a number of thermometers available that measure temperature. Using an ear thermometer is a quick and effective method.

You can also determine if your child has a fever by the way they feel! If a child feels hot to you, they tell you that they are hot, or they have both chills and sweats, it is likely that they have a fever. If a child does not feel hot to you, it is also likely that they do not have a fever.



Should I treat my child's fever? How?

Because fever is the body's natural response, it is not necessary to treat fever. But fever can be uncomfortable for your child. If this is the case, Tylenol can be used to treat fever. Treatment may help your child feel better. One misconception is that a sponge bath can treat fever. This is not true and it should not be used to treat fever.



When should my child see their doctor if they have a fever?

If you think your child has a fever for more than 2 days without any reason or the child is listless and refuses to drink or eat, it is important to have your child seen by a doctor.

For more information on fevers in children:

www.familydoctor.org

<http://familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/children/parents/common/common/069.html>

Images taken from:

http://www.channel4.com/news/media/2009/07/day28/28_doctor_g_k.jpg

<http://www.mcmua.com/images/BoyWithFever.jpg>

http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_NqZGWn7xKiU/Sns2LjTuYHI/AAAAAAAAe0/zts2UdHOZDQ/s400/child_with_fever.jpg