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Fever or Pain

Fever is the body's natural way of fighting infection. It stimulates the immune system and bacteria and viruses do not grow well in elevated temperatures.

Fever is a sign of illness, not a disease.

In some children, fever can be associated with the seizure or dehydration, but fever will not lead to brain damage or death.

If fever causes discomfort to your child, you may give acetaminophen every **4** hours (maximum 5 doses in 24 hours). If your child is older than 6 months, you may give ibuprofen every **6** hours. Check the charts on the second page for proper dosing according to weight.

Do NOT wake your child to give medication.

Do NOT alternate acetaminophen and ibuprofen to treat fever.

When to call the doctor:

Your child is under 3 months of age and has a rectal temperature of 100.4°F or higher.

Your child is unusually lethargic or irritable.

Fever has been present for longer than three days.

Your child also has symptoms such as sore throat without a cold, ear pain, abdominal pain, or pain when urinating.

Your child is drinking less fluid than usual and has had fewer than 4 wet diapers in the past 24 hours or 2 urinations during waking hours.

You are worried that your child is less active than normal or is having trouble breathing, whether or not s/he has a fever.

Where to take the temperature:

- Less than 3 months take a rectal temperature. A fever is over 100.4°F.
- Over 3 months take axillary (armpit) temperatures. A fever is over 99°F.

The dose of fever reducer is **always** determined by weight, not by age. It is much easier to use the infant drops even in an older child because you don't have to give as much volume. Chewables are fine over 18 months.

It usually takes 75-90 minutes for the fever to respond to the medicine.

The fever will come down 2° to 3°F, not necessarily to normal, and will bounce.