

#ScienceUpFirst

WHEN TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL? Kids Edition

Do you know the best method to measure your child's temperature?

YES

Does your child have a fever?

YES

Is your child less than 3 months old, has a chronic illness, or has a weakened or deficient immune system?

YES

You should go to the emergency department immediately (2,3).

NO

Does your child have a fever?

NO

NO

I'M NOT SURE

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A fever is any temperature above normal range, which depends on the method used to measure it (1):

Method	Normal range
Rectum	36.6°C to 37.9°C (97.9°F to 100.2°F)
Mouth	35.5°C to 37.5°C (95.9°F to 99.5°F)
Armpit	36.5°C to 37.5°C (97.8°F to 99.5°F)
Ear	35.8°C to 37.9°C (96.4°F to 100.2°F)

Sources: tinyurl.com/SUFKidERDecision

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Regardless of their age, does your child have any of the following symptoms (2,3,4):

- Low rectal temperature equal or below 36°C (96.8°F)
- Pale skin or abnormally coloured
- Show signs that suggest difficulties breathing (despite frequent nasal irrigation with saline water) such as:
 - The skin below and between the ribs is pulling with every breath (this is called retracting)
 - Flaring nostrils
- Difficulty feeding
- Show signs of moderate to severe dehydration*
- Is not responsive and less alert

*Signs of dehydration (4)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Severe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No urination for 6h in babies or 8h in older children • Dizziness, confusion and headache • Faster breathing • No tears • Skin doesn't bounce back • Sunken fontanels (soft spots on babies' heads) | <p>Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry mouth • Infrequent or dark urine • Less active than usual • Drowsiness and irritability <p>Mild</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mouth is drier than usual • Thirstier than usual • Less frequent urination |
|---|---|

NO

YES

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Regardless of their age, does your child (2,3,4):

- Show signs of mild to moderate dehydration (see previous slide)?
- Has a fever increasing rapidly, lasting more than 4 days or returning after subsiding for more than 24 hours?
- Has a harder time breathing than usual?
- Presents symptoms that worsen or do not improve after 7 days?

You should go to the emergency department immediately (2,3).

YES

Is your child under 2 years old?

NO

Is the fever alleviated with fever medication?

NO

Has the fever persisted for more than 48 hours?

NO

Call your provincial or territorial health line to talk with a healthcare professional (2,5).

It is normal for fever to last from 48 to 72 hours. While the fever subsides keep your child at home. While feverish, your child might be more irritable than usual and cry more (2).

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Does your child have the following symptoms (6):

- Cough
- Sneezing
- Fatigue
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose

YES

Your child probably has a cold and needs some rest (6).

Continue monitoring their temperature and symptoms and revisit this chart as often as necessary.

You can find your provincial or territorial health line number in our reference list: tinyurl.com/SUFKidERDecision

MORE FEVER INFO IN THE CAPTION

If you have any health concerns for your child, don't hesitate to call your provincial or territorial health line to talk with a healthcare professional (2,5).

STILL WORRIED?

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