



FEVER

Fever is common in small children. It is usually due to mild illnesses like colds and flu. These illnesses can last 7 - 10 days, and the fever may come and go several times each day during this time. If your child is less than 6 months and has a fever they should be checked by your family doctor, to rule out a serious infection.

Fever is the body's natural response to illness and is not harmful. Most of these illnesses are caused by viruses, and antibiotics do not help. (Children will recover from these illnesses without medicines).

A few children can have convulsions with high fever (usually more than 39°C). These convulsions do not harm the child, but you should always see a doctor to find out why they have a fever.

How you can manage the fever:

- Undress your child leaving a nappy and singlet on.
- Give your child lots of fluids regularly and keep encouraging them. Let them eat if they feel they want to.
- Keep the room cool, but don't have draughts blowing directly on them.
- A cool face cloth can help them feel better, but don't sponge their whole body down.
- Reducing fever may make your child more comfortable but will not make the illness go away more quickly.
- If your child seems irritable or is in pain you may choose to give Paracetamol ("Pamol", "Panadol") up to every four hours as directed on the bottle.
- Don't sleep in the same bed as your child, you may make the fever worse.

Giving these extra cares will help your child feel more comfortable.



You need to see your Family Doctor if your child is:

- Unusually sleepy
- Having difficulty breathing
- Disorientated or has a 'fit' (convulsion)
- Taking less than ½ normal fluids
- Complaining of a sore neck or head
- Complaining of pain – such as earache or abdominal pain
- Developing a rash (especially dark purple spots)
- Not improving within 48 hours

If you need an Ambulance dial 111