

# Fever Information Sheet

## Hyde Park Pediatrics

### 1) What is a fever?

- Fever is considered a temperature of 100.4°F (38°C).
- The most accurate way to take a temperature is rectally. Oral temperature is reasonably accurate but only rectal temperatures should be done in infants <2 months old.
- Armpit, ear, and forehead thermometers can be used as a guide but are not near as accurate as the other methods.

### 2) Are fevers dangerous?

- In general, no, fever will not hurt the child. A fever is the body's way of fighting a viral or bacterial infection.
- In infants <2 months old, however, fever can be a marker for a more serious infection and therefore needs to be seen immediately at the Children's ER.

### 3) How high is too high?

- The body will not generate a temperature that's high enough to hurt the brain so the actual number is not significant.
- In addition, the height of the fever does not correspond with the severity of the infection. More important is how the child is acting - are they drinking fluids, urinating normally, responding to you appropriately, breathing comfortably? If not, they should be evaluated in a timely manner.

### 4) Does every fever need to be treated?

- Not necessarily. The main purpose of treating with medication is to make the child more comfortable. It won't speed up the recovery process at all.

### 5) What if the fever doesn't come down with medication?

- The response or lack thereof to medication does not correspond to the severity of an illness or tell us anything about what's causing the fever.

### 6) How long should a fever last?

- For most viral illnesses we expect the fever to last 2-3 days. If it is lasting longer than that the child should be evaluated to see if a more significant infection is occurring.

### 7) What medications can be used to treat a fever?

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol) - can be used in children 2 months and older.
- Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) - can be used in children 6 months and older.
- Each medication can be used up to every 6 hours. In addition, you can alternate the medications every 3 hours as needed for comfort. However, persistent scheduling of medication is not recommended - let the doctor know if the child is needing the medication continuously for more than a few days.

### Acetaminophen (Tylenol) Dosing

Weight	Dose of either Infant's or Children's Oral suspension (160 mg/5 ml)
6-11 lbs	1.25 ml
12-17 lbs	2.5 ml
18-23 lbs	3.75 ml
24-35 lbs	5 ml
36-47 lbs	7.5 ml
48-71 lbs	10 ml
60-71 lbs	12.5 ml
72-95 lbs	15 ml

### Ibuprofen (Motrin) Dosing

Weight	Dose of Infant's Ibuprofen suspension (50 mg/1.25 ml)	Dose of Children's Ibuprofen suspension (100 mg/5 ml)
12-17 lbs	1.25 ml	
18-23 lbs	1.875 ml	
24-35 lbs		5 ml
36-47 lbs		7.5 ml
48-71 lbs		10 ml
60-71 lbs		12.5 ml
72-95 lbs		15 ml