

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