

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

High temperature (child)

Emergency Department

King's Mill Hospital

Mansfield Road
Sutton in Ashfield
Notts NG17 4JL
Telephone: 01623 622515, extension 2789

Newark Hospital

Boundary Road
Newark
Notts NG24 4DE
Telephone: 01636 681681

What medicines should I use to help?

- You may use paracetamol or ibuprofen to help your child feel more comfortable.
- Paracetamol and ibuprofen should never be given at the exact same time. You may give either paracetamol or ibuprofen first and then, if your child has not improved by the next dose of the chosen medicine is due you may want to consider using the other medicine.
- You must** follow the instructions provided in the leaflet supplied with your medicine bottle for the right dose for your child's age. Your pharmacist can give you more advice about medicines.
- Never** give aspirin to a child.

If your child has an illness which makes them very underweight for their age, talk to your doctor about the best doses for your child.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

What is a fever?

A fever is an increase in your child's body temperature above 38°C (100.4°F). This is a natural and healthy response to infection. Fever in children is common, but it can cause anxiety (worry) for parents and carers. Almost all children recover quickly and without any problems. However, in a very small number of children, the fever may not improve, or the child's health may get worse, which can sometimes be a sign of a serious illness or infection.

What causes fevers?

Viral infections are the most common cause of a fever. Viral infections cause many common illnesses, such as coughs, colds, flu or sickness and diarrhoea.

Bacterial infections are less common than viral infections, but also cause high temperatures. Bacteria are more likely to cause serious illnesses, such as pneumonia and meningitis.

How can I help my child?

If your baby is less than three months old, you must seek medical advice. You should:

- Keep your child cool.
- Give your child lots of fluids to drink.
- Keep your house cool. Open a window if the room feels warm, but do not cause a draught.
- Not put too many clothes or covers on your child.
- **Never** wrap a feverish child.
- **Never** tepid or cold sponge your child as this can cause shivering which can make their temperature rise further.

When should I seek urgent medical advice?

You must take your child to the nearest Emergency Department immediately or phone 999 if your child:

- Is difficult to wake.
- Is refusing to drink.
- Is vomiting repeatedly.
- Is complaining of the light hurting their eyes.
- Has blue lips.

- Is very irritable or has an unusual cry.
- Becomes very pale.
- Develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (see the 'tumbler test' below).
- Is finding it hard to breathe, too breathless to talk.

To manage your child's fever at home, you should:

- Check your child regularly during the day and night to make sure they are not getting worse.
- Do the 'tumbler test' for meningitis - press a glass tumbler firmly against a rash if your child has one. If you can see the spots through the glass and they do not fade, this is called a 'non-blanching rash'. If this rash is present, seek medical advice **immediately**. The rash is harder to see on dark skin, so check paler areas, such as palms of the hands, soles of the feet and tummy.
- Not overdress a child with a fever.
- Remove some of their clothing if they are hot to touch, to help cool them down.
- Offer small drinks often.
- Keep your child away from nursery or school while they are unwell.
- Follow the advice on the next page if you are worried your child is not improving.