

# What to do if your child is feverish

## What is a fever

A fever is when your child has a temperature above 38°C. This is a sign that your child may have an infection. These are very common and are frequently caused by viruses. They may be ear infections, sore throats, coughs or vomiting and diarrhoea. Occasionally the temperature can be caused by bacteria which can be treated with antibiotics.

To check your child's temperature, make sure you have an appropriate thermometer for their age. Below 6 months an underarm thermometer and above 6 months an ear or tympanic thermometer should be used.

If your child looks well but has a fever it is possible to try and treat them yourself. If they do not, it may be worth seeking medical advice.

## What you can do to help

It is important to keep giving your child fluids or breast milk if they are breast fed.

Paracetamol and ibuprofen should be given as this can reduce the temperature and make your child feel better. Make sure you check the correct dose for your child and the number of times appropriate to give the dose in 24 hours. This should be on the bottle. Both can be given together, however, it may be appropriate to try one and if things are not improving, the other can be given an hour later.

It is important not to under or overdress your child. Their normal level of clothing should be fine. Aim to keep the room temperature at about 18°C.

**Call emergency 999** , if your child is:

- x Under 3 months old and has a temperature of 38°C or above
- x Very pale, grey or blue
- x Lifeless, unconscious, slow to wake or having difficulty staying awake
- x Making a continuous weak or high-pitched cry

x Breathing fast, more than 60 breaths a minute, with signs of distress

x

