

Discharge advice sheet for carers of children younger than 5 years who have a fever

We think that your child is well enough to go home now, but please telephone the number below if:

- Your child's health gets worse
- You are worried
- You have concerns about looking after your child at home
- Your child has a fit
- Your child develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (see the 'tumbler test' at the end of this sheet)
- The fever lasts longer than 5 days

Phone this number for further advice.....

Or take them to as soon as possible.

What to do when your child has fever

Preventing dehydration

Offer your child regular drinks (where a baby or child is breastfed the most appropriate fluid is breastmilk).

Look for signs of dehydration:

- Sunken fontanelle (soft spot on baby's head)
- Dry mouth
- Sunken eyes
- No tears

If you find signs of dehydration encourage your child to drink more fluids and seek further advice if you are worried.

Clothing

Children with fever should not be under or over dressed. If your child is shivering or sweating a lot, change the amount of clothes they are wearing.

Medicines to reduce temperature

It's not necessary to use medicines (paracetamol or ibuprofen) to treat your child's temperature. But if your child has a fever and is distressed or very unwell, you can help to make them feel more comfortable by giving them either paracetamol or ibuprofen (please read the instructions on the bottle first). Don't give these medicines at the same time. If your child has not improved 2-3 hours later, you may want to try giving the other medicine.

Please ask your local community pharmacist for more advice about medicines.

Sponging

Do not sponge your child with water. This does not help to reduce fever.

Checking on your child

Check your child during the night for rashes and to see if they are getting better. If a rash appears, do the tumbler test (see below). If you are concerned that your child is not improving phone the number on the front of this sheet to seek advice.

Keep your child away from nursery or school while they have a fever and notify the school or nursery or nursery of the illness.



Do the 'tumbler test' if your child has a rash. Press a glass tumbler firmly against the rash. 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, tummy and inside the eyelids.

(Photo courtesy of the Meningitis Research Foundation)