

# Fever Advice Sheet

Advice for parents and carers of children younger than 5 years



## How is your child? (traffic light advice)



Red

- If your child:
- becomes difficult to rouse
  - becomes pale and floppy
  - is finding it hard to breathe
  - has a fit, or is fretful or irritable when touched
  - develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (see the 'Glass Test' overleaf)
  - is under 3 months and has an unexplained fever

**You need urgent help**  
please phone 999  
or go to the nearest  
Hospital Emergency  
(A&E) Department



Amber

- If your child's:
- health gets worse or if you are worried
  - seems dehydrated (dry mouth, sunken eyes, no tears, sunken fontanelle / soft spot on baby's head, drowsy, or passing less urine than normal)
  - condition fails to respond to Paracetamol or Ibuprofen
  - is 3-6 months old and has a fever

**You need to contact a  
doctor or nurse today**  
Please ring your  
GP surgery or call  
NHS 111 - dial 111



Green

- If none of the above features are present

**Self Care**  
Using the advice overleaf  
you can provide the care  
your child needs at home

## Some useful phone numbers (You may want to add some numbers on here too)



**GP Surgery**  
(make a note of number here)

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**NHS 111**  
**dial 111**

(available 24 hrs -  
7 days a week)

**School Nurse /  
Health Visiting Team**  
(make a note of number here)

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**For online advice: Wessex Healthier Together [www.what0-18.nhs.uk](http://www.what0-18.nhs.uk) (available 24 hrs/7 days a week)**

**Family Information Service:** All areas have an online service providing useful information for Families set up by local councils

[www.what0-18.nhs.uk](http://www.what0-18.nhs.uk)

This guidance was written in collaboration with the SE Coast SCN and involved extensive consultation with healthcare professionals in Wessex

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Most children with a fever do get better very quickly but some children can get worse. You need to regularly check your child during the day and also through the night and follow the advice given below.

## Practical things you can do to help your child

- Check your child during the night to see if they are getting better (follow traffic light advice overleaf).
- If a rash appears do “the glass test” (see guidance below).
- If you are concerned that your child is not improving follow the advice on the front of this sheet.
- Children with fever should not be under or over dressed.
- Offer your child regular drinks (where a baby is breastfed the most appropriate fluid is breast milk).
- If your child is due to have immunisations please consult your GP, Practice Nurse or Health Visitor for advice as there may be no need to delay their appointment.
- If you need to keep your child away from nursery or school while they are unwell and have a fever please notify the nursery or school – your Health Visitor, Practice Nurse or GP will be able to advise you if you are unsure.

## Using medicines to help

- If your child is distressed or very unwell you may use medicines (Paracetamol or Ibuprofen) to help them feel more comfortable however it is not always necessary.
- Don't give both medicines (Paracetamol and Ibuprofen) at the same time.
- Use one and if your child has not improved 2-3 hours later you may want to try giving the other medicine.
- Please read the instructions on the medicine bottle first for dose and frequency.
- Or you could ask your local community pharmacist for more advice about medicines.
- Aspirin should not be given to children for treatment of pain or a fever.

### The Glass Test

Do the 'glass 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 as you press the glass onto the skin** then this is called a 'non-blanching rash'. If you see this type of rash, 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.

(Photo courtesy of the Meningitis Research Foundation 2013)

