A PARENT’S GUIDE TO

FEVERS

DON’T CALL THE SCHOOL OFFICE JUST YET! Normal body temperature is 98.6°F (37°C). But everyone’s body temperature (adults and kids alike) fluctuates throughout the day — depending on age, activity level and other factors. The magic number for a fever: 100.4°F (38.0°C) or above.

When NOT to worry

Fever that lasts LESS than 3 days — As long as your child’s behavior is pretty much normal — playing, eating and drinking — you don’t need to stress. OK! They’re not more ill than usual (thought?)

Temperatures of up to 102°F

If your child is 3 months to 3 years old (or up to 103°F if your child is older), these temperatures can be a normal sign of fighting a cold.

When TO CALL your pediatrician

You have an infant younger than 3 months.

A fever may be your baby’s only warning sign that he or she is facing a serious illness.

You child’s fever lasts 5 days or more.

Your pediatrician may need to investigate any underlying cause further.

Your child’s fever is higher than 103°F.

If your child has a fever of 103°F that doesn’t come down with the use of acetaminophen or ibuprofen within 2 hours, call your doctor right away for advice.

Low-grade fevers can be normal if they last less than 24 hours and if your child was just immunized.

YOUR CHILD CAN RETURN TO DAYCARE OR SCHOOL when they are symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

RARE, but important to keep in mind.

Persistent or multiple fevers — If your pediatrician can’t figure out what’s causing a constant or repeat fever, your child may be referred to a specialist (pediatric infectious disease expert or pediatric rheumatologist) to find an answer.

TREATMENT TIPS

› Keep your child cool. Avoid overly warm clothing or heavy blankets.
› Prevent dehydration by offering plenty of clear (but not red) liquids: water, fruit juice or Pedialyte® (regular or potentially get more success with the Popsicle variety!)
› Make certain your son or daughter rests.
› Try a lukewarm (not cold!) bath to help bring a temperature down.

Your child’s fever is LESS than 3 days.

Not playing, eating or sleeping as normal — or being hard to rouse — are cause for concern.

Also, babies who aren’t wetting 3 diapers/day and older children who aren’t urinating every 8-12 hours are at risk for becoming dehydrated.

When NOT to worry

Fevers that last LESS than 3 days — As long as your child’s behavior is pretty much normal — playing, eating and drinking — you don’t need to stress. OK! They’re not more ill than usual (thought?)

Temperatures of up to 102°F

Don’t worry — fears that last LESS than 5 days.

As long as your child’s behavior is pretty much normal — playing, eating and drinking — you don’t need to stress. OK! They’re not more ill than usual (thought?)

Basic steps you can do:

› Keep your child cool. Avoid overly warm clothing or heavy blankets.
› Prevent dehydration by offering plenty of clear (but not red) liquids: water, fruit juice or Pedialyte® (regular or potentially get more success with the Popsicle variety!)
› Make certain your son or daughter rests.
› For temperatures above 102°F, acetaminophen (Tylenol®) can be given to those 6 months and older.
› For temperatures above 102.5°F, ibuprofen can be given to children 3 months and older.
› For temperatures above 103°F that doesn’t come down with the use of acetaminophen or ibuprofen within 2 hours, call your doctor right away for advice.

When TO CALL your pediatrician

You have an infant younger than 3 months.

A fever may be your baby’s only warning sign that he or she is facing a serious illness.

You child’s fever lasts 5 days or more.

Your pediatrician may need to investigate any underlying cause further.

Your child’s fever is higher than 103°F.

If your child has a fever of 103°F that doesn’t come down with the use of acetaminophen or ibuprofen within 2 hours, call your doctor right away for advice.

Your child’s fever is LESS than 3 days.

Not playing, eating or sleeping as normal — or being hard to rouse — are cause for concern.

Also, babies who aren’t wetting 3 diapers/day and older children who aren’t urinating every 8-12 hours are at risk for becoming dehydrated.

YOUR CHILD CAN RETURN TO DAYCARE OR SCHOOL when they are symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of medication.