

Fever in children

Information brochure for parents

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Contact
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Page
1/2

1 Definition and cause of fever

- Child > 3 months: temperature more than 38.5° (preferably measured rectally)
- Infant < 3 months: temperature more than 38.0° measured rectally

Fever is a normal reaction of the body to an infection that can be caused by a bacterium or a virus. Often it is the result of a **viral infection**. Viral infections are usually harmless and almost always heal spontaneously. Which is why a wait-and see-attitude is usually the right one. **Bacterial infections** occur less frequently. Antibiotics have no effect on viral infections, only on bacterial infections. Your doctor decides when antibiotics are needed.

Children with a fever should not go to the daycare centre or to school. Rest, not being clothed too warmly, and sufficient fluid intake are important. Loss of appetite is normal.

2 What medication should you use for fever and sickness?

Preferably use syrup or pills. These are more effective than a suppository (suppo). A suppository is a good alternative in the case of vomiting. These medications are available from the pharmacy without a prescription. Always read the patient information leaflet.

- **First choice:** Paracetamol (Dafalgan®, Perdolan®, ...)
Dose: 15 mg/kg/dose maximum 4x/day (= every six hours)
- **Second choice only if the effect of first choice is inadequate:** Ibuprofen (Perdophen®, Nurofen®, ...).
To be avoided under six months or under six kg, or in the case of chickenpox or kidney abnormalities.
Dose: 5 mg/kg/dose maximum 3x/day (= every eight hours)

Use the supplied pipette or dosing spoon: dose the medication according to your child's weight = correct amount. Optionally, you can alternate between both medications, provided that a fever ($\geq 38.5^\circ$) has been measured and your child is suffering from it.

3 When to consult a doctor?

- Younger than 3 months
- More than 3 days of fever

- Fluid intake less than half of normal
- Very low (re)active child
- Constant crying, moaning
- Fever does not decrease despite maximum fever treatment
- Vomiting
- Greatly reduced or no urination
- Child becomes sick more quickly
- Other symptoms of concern (such as skin rashes, febrile seizures, etc, ...)

4 Contact details

Paediatrics Department University Hospital Ghent handles third-line care, i.e. care intended for complicated disorders. The number of hospital beds is therefore limited. If hospitalisation is required for your child, admission to another hospital may be arranged. For this reason we advise you to choose your own doctor/paediatrician who can monitor your child and refer the child to us if necessary.

For urgent questions:

- Emergencies University Hospital Ghent: 09/332.27.42
- Paediatrician on duty at University Hospital Ghent: 09/332.35.15

If **emergency** medical assistance is required, come to the emergency department.

If **immediate** medical assistance is required, call 112.

This brochure does not replace medical consultation with a doctor. This brochure is also available in other languages.

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