



## Fever

**Levels of Fever:** Most fevers are good for children and help the body fight infection. Use the following definitions to help put the child's level of fever into perspective:

101-102 degreesF	low grade fevers and beneficial
102-104 degreesF	moderate grade fevers and beneficial
over 104 degreesF	high fevers and cause discomfort, but harmless
over 105 degreesF	higher risk of bacterial infections
over 107 degreesF	the fever itself can be harmful

### **Treatment for All Fevers: Extra Fluids and Less Clothing**

- Give cold fluids orally in unlimited amounts as good hydration replaces sweat and improves heat loss via the skin.
- Dress in 1 layer of lightweight clothing and sleep with 1 light blanket. Avoid bundling. Caution: overheated infants can't undress themselves.

**Fever Medicine:** The goal of fever therapy is to bring the temperature down to a comfortable level. Fever medicine usually lowers the fever by 2 to 3 degrees. Refer to dosage instructions offered by the manufacturer.

- For fevers of 100-102 degreesF, extra fluids and less clothing is recommended. Ibuprofen or acetaminophen is not necessary.
- If your child has a fever above 102 degreesF and is uncomfortable give either ibuprofen or acetaminophen. Do not alternate ibuprofen and acetaminophen as you may risk overdose. Avoid aspirin due to the risk of Reye's syndrome.

**Sponging:** Always give fever medicine first. Sponging is beneficial for an uncomfortable child with a fever over 103 degreesF that has not come down with ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

Sponging is optional for high fevers, not required.

- Use lukewarm water (85-90 degreesF). Do not use rubbing alcohol.
- Sponge for 20-30 minutes. If your child shivers, stop sponging or increase the water temperature.

**Expected Course of Fever:** Most fevers associated with viral illnesses fluctuate between 101 and 104 degreesF and last for 2 or 3 days.

### **Call the Office If:**

- the child looks very sick 1 hour after the ibuprofen or acetaminophen was given
- the fever goes above 105 degreesF
- the fever lasts longer than 3 days (72 hours)
- the child becomes worse