

Fever



What is fever?



Your child has a fever if his or her body temperature is above 38.0°C.

A FEVER IS A SYMPTOM, NOT A DISEASE.

Like all symptoms, for example cough or vomiting, a fever may be due to illnesses that are minor or serious. Fortunately, most fevers in children are due to infections that are minor and self-limiting.

What thermometer should I use?

Age	Instrument
Less than 4 weeks old	Axillary (armpit) thermometer
4 weeks old and above	Axillary (armpit) thermometer, tympanic (ear) thermometer

Why does fever happen?

Fever occurs due to an inflammatory process that happens most commonly in response to an infection. It can be beneficial in enhancing the body's immune system towards viruses and bacteria. Most fevers that are associated with illnesses range from 38.0°C to 40.0°C and last for 3 to 5 days. In general, the intensity of the fever does not relate to the seriousness of the illness. How your child behaves (e.g. mood, energy levels and behaviour) is more important.

Fever does not cause brain damage unless it is due to a brain infection. In those cases, your child will be very sick and may present with worrying features such as lethargy, drowsiness, excessive irritability, severe headache or seizures.



How can I care for my child?

The main goal is to improve your child's overall comfort. You can give fever medications as instructed by your child's doctor. Both oral and rectal fever medications are equally effective. It is important to follow the instructions on the drug label as the same medication prescribed by different doctors may have different concentrations.

The use of routine sponging in reducing temperature is short-lived and may cause more discomfort to your child.

Your child may have a poorer appetite, but should be given lots of fluids to drink. Emphasise the importance of rest as part of recovery.

When should I bring my child to the Children's Emergency?



Sometimes, children who have a minor illness initially may develop a more serious infection later. If your child seems to be getting sicker and has any of the symptoms listed on the following page, please go to the Children's Emergency immediately. This applies even if your child has just left the Children's Emergency and is taking medications or drugs. It is better to return for a false alarm than to wait too long.



Should I bring my child to the Urgent Care Clinic (UCC) or Children's Emergency?

Please bring your child to the UCC* if he/she:

- Has a temperature of between 37.5 to 40.5°C
- Has mild breathing difficulty
- Is slightly lethargic
- Is drinking at least 50% of the usual fluid intake
- Passes urine at least thrice a day



*UCC is a walk-in clinic in the community for children and adolescents up to 18 years old with urgent but non-life threatening conditions. It is open daily from 9am to 11pm (last registration at 9pm).

The information provided in this publication is meant purely for educational purposes and may not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should seek the advice of your doctor or a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition.

Please bring your child to the Children's Emergency immediately if he/she:

- Has a temperature of more than 41.0°C, or 38.0°C for those less than 3 months old
- Is difficult to awaken. Fever may make children sleep more but they should awaken easily and be able to respond to you
- Seems confused or delirious
- Cries constantly and you cannot settle him/her
- Has breathing difficulty
- Is very lethargic
- Has a skin colour that appears pale or grey
- Has bruising spots
- Has a fit (seizure or convulsion)
- Is drinking less fluids and has significantly less urine output than usual



Remember

- A high fever does not necessarily mean a serious illness.
- Conversely, a low-grade fever does not necessarily mean that the illness is minor.
- Even if the fever does not come down with fever medications, it does not necessarily mean that the illness is serious.
- The way your child behaves is the most important indicator of the severity of the illness.

About the Khoo Teck Puat – National University Children’s Medical Institute (KTP-NUCMI)

The KTP-NUCMI is the paediatric arm of the National University Hospital and comprises the Departments of Paediatrics, Paediatric Surgery and Neonatology. We provide comprehensive and specialised medical and surgical services for newborns, children and adolescents, and are the only public hospital in Singapore that offers paediatric kidney and liver transplant programmes. Through a generous gift from the Estate of Khoo Teck Puat, we have set up an integrated outpatient facility with medical, diagnostic and rehabilitation services.

For more information about us, visit www.nuh.com.sg/ktp-nucmi.

Contact Us

24-hour Children’s Emergency

Location: NUH Main Building, Zone F, Level 1

General Enquiry: +65 6772 5000

KTP-NUCMI

Location: NUH Main Building, Zone E, Level 2

(Accessible via Kent Ridge Wing, Zone C, Level 2, Lift Lobby C)

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri), 8.30am – 12.30pm (Sat)

General Enquiry: +65 6772 5736

Appointment Line: +65 6908 2222

Email: ktpnucmi_appt@nuhs.edu.sg

9a Viva-University Children’s Cancer Centre

Location: NUH Medical Centre, Zone B, Level 9

Operating Hours: 8am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6772 5030

Fax: +65 6872 4314

Email: cbccappt@nuhs.edu.sg

NUH Children’s Urgent Care Clinic @ Bukit Panjang

Location: Junction 10, 1 Woodlands Road, #01-22, Singapore 677899

Operating Hours: 9am – 11pm daily (including public holidays)

General Enquiry: +65 6219 1538

Email: childreucc@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/ucc

NUH Child Development Unit @ JMC

Location: Jurong Medical Centre,

60 Jurong West Central 3, Level 2, Singapore 648346

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6665 2530/2531

Fax: +65 6665 0158

Email: cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/cdu

NUH Child Development Unit @ Keat Hong

Location: Keat Hong Community Club,

2 Choa Chu Kang Loop, #03-01, Singapore 689687

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6769 4537/4637

Fax: +65 6665 0158

Email: cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/cdu

National University Hospital

Location: 5 Lower Kent Ridge Road, Singapore 119074

Tel: +65 6908 2222

Email: contactus@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg



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