

Taking Your Child's Temperature

Fever is the body's natural way of fighting infection. It protects the body by stimulating the immune system. Some bacteria and viruses do not grow well when the body's temperature is higher than normal. Fever is one sign of illness, not a disease. Fever alone will not cause permanent harm, brain damage or death. For children older than three months, checking temperature one or two times per day during illness is often enough.

Call Nurse Advisor any time at (608) 775-4454 or (800) 858-1050 if your child:

- Is under three (3) months old and has a fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius/Centigrade) or higher.
- Is irritable or abnormally drowsy or sluggish.
- Has fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius/Centigrade) or higher for longer than three to five days.
- Is drinking much less fluid than usual and urinating much less.

Types of thermometers

Digital and glass thermometers are equally accurate. They can be used in the mouth, armpit or rectum. *Digital thermometers* work faster and are easier to read. We recommend you replace any glass thermometer with a digital one. *A glass thermometer contains mercury and should be taken to your community's hazardous waste site.*

Ear (tympanic) thermometers are fast and easy to use, but more expensive. Temperatures are not accurate in children under 6 months of age. The thermometer must be correctly aimed at the eardrum to be accurate, which takes a lot of practice.

Forehead temperature strips and temperature-sensitive pacifiers are not recommended because they are not accurate.

Taking armpit and oral temperatures

An armpit (axillary) temperature is safe for infants and young children at home.

- Take the temperature at least 15 minutes after bathing or exercise.

- Make sure the armpit is dry.
- Put the tip of the thermometer in the center of the armpit and hold child's elbow against the side of the chest.

For a child able to safely hold a thermometer in his/her mouth, remember:

- Temperature by mouth can be affected by breathing cold air, and eating or drinking. Wait 20 minutes to check temperature after a child has had hot or cold foods or beverages.
- Place the tip of the thermometer under one side of the tongue. The child should hold it with lips and tongue.

Read the label

Name brands and store brands of acetaminophen and ibuprofen come in many different strengths. Make sure you know the strength (concentration) you are using. Our Children's Fever & Pain Management Dosage Charts (see next page) show the correct dose by age and weight.

Some over-the-counter cough/cold medicines contain fever-reducing medicine. If you are giving medication for fever, always check the label for acetaminophen or ibuprofen first before giving any other medicine. Call your healthcare provider or pharmacy if you have any questions about using these combination products.

Do not switch back and forth between acetaminophen and ibuprofen. You may give too much of one or both medicines.

If you have questions or concerns about this information and the dosage charts that follow, contact a pharmacist, your care provider or Nurse Advisor at (608) 775-4454 or (800) 858-1050.

See dosage charts on page 2.

Children's Fever & Pain Management – Dosage Charts

Use the dispenser (dropper, oral syringe or measuring cup) sold with the product. You can also use a cooking teaspoon or a medication teaspoon. **Do not use regular silverware.** You may give too much or too little medicine to your child.

Acetaminophen* dosing for children with fever or pain – *Brand names include Tylenol

Doses can be given every 4 to 6 hours as needed. No more than 5 doses per day are recommended.

What you plan to use → Child's weight ↓	Acetaminophen infant drops 80 mg in 0.8 ml dispenser <small>Sizes may vary. Read marks carefully. Fill to correct line.</small>	Acetaminophen suspension, elixir or syrup 160 mg equals 5 ml (1 teaspoon) measuring cup or teaspoon	Acetaminophen chewable children's tablets 80 mg chewable tablet	Acetaminophen junior chewable tablets or caplets 160 mg chewable tablet or caplet
6-11 pounds	0.4 ml	1/4 teaspoon or 1.25 ml	-----	-----
12-17 pounds	0.8 ml	1/2 teaspoon or 2.5 ml	-----	-----
18-24 pounds	1.2 ml	3/4 teaspoon or 3.75 ml	-----	-----
25-35 pounds	1.6 ml	1 teaspoon or 5 ml	2 tablets	-----
36-47 pounds	-----	1 1/2 teaspoons or 7.5 ml	3 tablets	-----
48-59 pounds	-----	2 teaspoons or 10 ml	4 tablets	2 caplets or tablets
60-71 pounds	-----	2 1/2 teaspoons or 12.5 ml	5 tablets	2 1/2 caplets or tablets
72-95 pounds	-----	3 teaspoons or 15 ml	6 tablets	3 caplets or tablets
over 95 pounds	-----	4 teaspoons or 20ml	8 tablets	4 caplets or tablets

Ibuprofen* dosing for children with fever or pain – *Brand names include Motrin and Advil.

Doses can be given every 6 to 8 hours as needed for children 6 months or older. No more than 4 doses per day are recommended.

What you plan to use → Child's weight ↓	Ibuprofen infant drops 50 mg in 1.25 ml dispenser <small>Sizes may vary. Read marks carefully. Fill to correct line.</small>	Ibuprofen suspension 100 mg in 5 ml (1 teaspoon) measuring cup or teaspoon	Ibuprofen chewable children's tablets 50 mg chewable tablet	Ibuprofen junior chewable tablets or caplets 100 mg/caplet or chewable tablet
12-17 pounds	1.25 ml	1/2 teaspoon or 2.5 ml	-----	-----
18-23 pounds	1.875 ml	3/4 teaspoon or 3.75 ml	-----	-----
24-35 pounds	2.5 ml	1 teaspoon or 5 ml	2 tablets	-----
36-47 pounds	-----	1 1/2 teaspoons or 7.5 ml	3 tablets	-----
48-59 pounds	-----	2 teaspoons or 10 ml	4 tablets	2 caplets or tablets
60-71 pounds	-----	2 1/2 teaspoons or 12.5 ml	5 tablets	2 1/2 caplets or tablets
72-95 pounds	-----	3 teaspoons or 15 ml	6 tablets	3 caplets or tablets
over 95 pounds	-----	4 teaspoons or 20ml	8 tablets	4 caplets or tablets

Questions? Call Nurse Advisor (608-775-4454 or 800-858-1050), a pharmacist or your care provider.

This educational information supports the care provided by your physician. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Call your healthcare provider immediately if you think you

may have a medical emergency. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider before starting any new treatment or when you have questions regarding a medical condition.