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“Child has a fever? Stay C.A.L.M.!”

www.kidgrowth.com

C.A.L.M. is a simple and clear four-step strategy for parents to follow when their child gets a fever, to help assess the situation and make their child more comfortable. C.A.L.M., when used as a common ground or shared tool, helps strengthen the parent/professional team by providing a common language and a common strategy for treatment of fever.

Check temperature.

Take your child's temperature by mouth (oral), rectum (rectal), armpit (axillary) or ear canal (tympanic). Temperatures above the following are considered to be fevers:

- Rectal: 100.4°F (38.0°C)
- Oral: 100°F (37.8°C)
- Axillary: 99°F (37.2°C)

Remember, **a fever is not an illness; it's a sign that your child is fighting an illness.** Always assess your child's behavior and look for other symptoms. Call a health care professional right away if:

- Your child is 3 months or younger and has a fever.
- Your child has a fever of 105.0°F (40.6°C) or higher and it will not go down.
- The temperature does not coincide with the severity of the illness; young infants may not have a fever but be very sick.
- You are unsure which fever medicine to give your child.
- Your child appears very sick.
- The fever went away for more than 24 hours and then returned.
- Your child has a history of febrile seizures.
- You have other questions or concerns.

Amend for other symptoms.

Is your child acting differently in any way? Does he or she have any of the following symptoms?

- sore throat
- vomiting / diarrhea
- irritability
- infrequent or painful urination
- runny nose
- ear pain
- trouble sleeping
- no appetite
- achiness
- lack of energy
- pale/flush/ mottled skin
- skin rash

Lower the temperature.

- Set the room temperature between 65°-70°F.
- Remove warm clothing.
- Apply cool, moist compresses to the forehead, arms or hands.
- Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids.
- Keep your child rested, quiet and comfortable.
- If shivering, keep your child warm until shivering stops.
- If your child appears uncomfortable, consider medication to lower the fever.

Two kinds of over-the-counter medications are recommended for lowering fever in children: acetaminophen (e.g. Children's Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (e.g. Children's Motrin®).

- Acetaminophen, due to its superior safety profile, can be used in virtually all situations including:
 - everyday fevers
 - discomfort following immunizations
- Ibuprofen may provide better fever relief in the following situations:
 - high fevers
 - when up to eight hours of relief is desired

Both medicines are effective in lowering fever and work in about 30 to 60 minutes. Use only as directed and follow the package instructions. Consult your doctor for dosing under age 2. If you have questions about which medication is best for your child, ask your health care professional.

Monitor your child's temperature and behavior, as well as his or her intake of fluids and watch for signs of dehydration (dry mouth, infrequent urination). Call a health care professional if your child:

- Appears very sick.
- Acts confused or sees/hears things that aren't there.
- Has a stiff neck (unable to touch chin to chest).
- Has trouble breathing.
- Has a seizure (arms and legs jerk uncontrollably).
- Has a skin rash.
- Cries inconsolably.
- Is difficult to awaken.
- Has an underlying risk factor for serious infection, such as sickle cell disease, heart or kidney problems.
- You are unable to consistently lower your child's fever or your child develops other serious symptoms.
- You have helped to manage the illness when:
 - Your child is acting less sick.
 - Your child is sleeping comfortably.
 - Your child is eating.
 - Your child is able to play for short times.