



WHAT IS A FEVER?

A fever is a body temperature higher than normal. It is part of the body's defense against infection. In children, it is defined as a measured temperature of 100.4°F and higher.

WHAT CAUSES FEVER?

Fever is a symptom, not an illness. Children commonly get fevers from infections. Fever activates the body's immune system and fights infection. The fever itself is usually not dangerous, and does not cause permanent harm to the brain or other organs.

HOW LONG CAN A FEVER LAST?

Most fevers range from 101°F to 104°F (38.3°C to 40°C) and last for 2 to 3 days. In general, a fever is not a good indication of how serious the illness is. It is important to determine how sick your child is by how he or she acts, not just by the fever itself.

HOW DO I MEASURE A TEMPERATURE?

There are many ways to check for fever. Digital thermometers are much safer than glass/mercury thermometers.

ARMPIT

- Quick and easy. Safer for a baby less than 3 months old.
 1. Put the tip of the thermometer in a dry armpit.
 2. Close the armpit by holding the elbow against the chest.

RECTUM

- For children less than 4 or 5 years old.
 1. Have your child lie stomach down on your lap.
 2. Put some water-based lubricating jelly on the end of the thermometer and on the rectum (the opening of the anus.)
 3. Gently put the thermometer gently into the rectum about 1 inch. (If the child is less than 6 months old, put it in only about 1/4 to 1/2 inch.)
 4. Hold your child still.

EAR

- For children greater than 6 months old.
- If your child has been outdoors on a cold day, he or she needs to be inside for 15 minutes before taking the temperature.
 1. Pull the ear backward to straighten the ear canal.
 2. Place the end of the thermometer into your child's ear canal. It only takes about 2 seconds to take the temperature.

MOUTH

- For children older than 4 or 5 years old, take the temperature by mouth.
- Be sure your child has not had a cold or hot drink in the last 30 minutes.
 1. Put the tip of the thermometer under one side of the tongue and toward the back.
 2. Have your child hold the thermometer in place with his lips and fingers (not teeth).

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HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD WITH A FEVER?

Keeping your child comfortable should be a top priority. Try these steps to reduce a fever:

- Administer an anti-fever medication.
 - Acetaminophen (brand name: Tylenol) is a good choice.
 - Ibuprofen is another choice for kids older than 6 months of age.
 - **DO NOT give aspirin**, as it causes severe and dangerous side effects in children.
- Dress your child lightly. Extra clothing or blankets will trap body heat and cause the temperature to rise.
- Place cold washcloths over your child's forehead.
- Give your child a lukewarm bath.
- Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids. Try popsicles or ice chips.
- Do not use alcohol baths.
- When your child is well, see the doctor regularly to update their vaccines.

WHAT ABOUT FEBRILE SEIZURES?

Fevers do not always trigger a seizure. Less than 5% of children will develop a brief seizure from fever. This happens most commonly to toddlers. The seizure is usually not harmful, but you should still have your child see a doctor if this happens.

WHEN DO I CALL THE DOCTOR?

Call your doctor **IMMEDIATELY** if:

- Your child is less than 3 months old with a temperature over 100.4°F or 38°C.
- Your child has a fever and looks or acts very sick:
 - Fussy or difficult to wake up
 - Headache or stiff neck
 - Trouble breathing
 - Unable to swallow
 - Refusing to drink
 - Rash
 - Seizure

Call your doctor within 24 hours if:

- Your child is 3 and 6 months old with a temperature over 100.4°F or 38°C.
- Your child is older than 6 months with a temperature over 104°F or 40°C
- Fever has lasted more than 3 days
- Not as active or playful as usual
- Not drinking fluids well
- You have other concerns or questions

Sources:

- Children's Hospital Boston
- MedlinePlus

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發燒是甚麼？

發燒就是身體的溫度高於正常人體溫度。它是人體抗感染防禦系統的一部份。對兒童而言，體溫達到或超過華氏 100.4 度，就是發燒。

甚麼引起發燒？

發燒是一種症狀，而不是一種疾病。兒童通常因為感染引起發燒。發燒激活人體的免疫系統並能抵抗感染。一般發燒本身並不危險，也不會對腦部或其它器官造成長期傷害。

發燒會持續多久？

大部份的發燒是在華氏 101 度到 104 度（即攝氏 38.3 度到 40 度）之間，會持許兩到三天。一般而言，發燒不是衡量疾病嚴重性的一個很好依據，重要的是通過孩子的行為表現來確定他/她的病情是否嚴重，而不是單單根據發燒來衡量。

如何測量體溫？

有很多測量發燒的方法，數碼體溫計比玻璃/水銀體溫計要安全。

腋下測量

- 快捷方便，對不滿三個月的嬰兒較為安全。
 - 把體溫計的尖端部份放在腋下（腋下要保持乾燥）。
 - 把手臂放下，手肘靠在胸前。

直腸測量

- 適用於四歲或五歲以下的兒童。
 - 讓孩子腹臥在您的大腿上。
 - 在體溫計的尖端及孩子的肛門塗上水性潤滑劑。
 - 把體溫計輕輕插入肛門/直腸約一寸。（如果孩子不到六個月，只需插入 1/4 到 1/2 寸）
 - 捉緊孩子不讓他/她亂動。

耳道測量

- 適用於六個月以上的嬰兒。
- 如果天氣寒冷，孩子在戶外活動，他/她必須進室內 15 分鐘後才測量體溫。
 - 把耳朵往後拉，使耳道拉直。
 - 把體溫計的尖端部份放在耳道裡，只需兩秒鐘就能測出體溫。

舌下測量

- 四歲或五歲以上的孩子，可使用舌下測量法。
- 確定孩子 30 分鐘前沒有喝冷的或熱的飲料。
 - 把體溫計的尖端部份放在孩子舌底一側靠後的位置。
 - 讓孩子用嘴唇（不要用牙齒）和手指保持住體溫計的位置。

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如何幫助正在發燒的孩子？

首要考慮的是減輕孩子發燒時的不適感，可以嘗試以下的方法：

- 使用退燒藥
 - Acetaminophen (品牌名稱: Tylenol) 是不錯的選擇
 - 六個月以上的孩子也可以選擇 Ibuprofen
 - **不要使用 Aspirin (阿斯匹林)**，它會對兒童產生嚴重的副作用
- 讓孩子少穿點衣服，因為加衣服或蓋上被毯會使身體的熱量不能散發，導致體溫升高
- 把一條冷毛巾放在孩子的前額上
- 給孩子洗一個溫水澡
- 讓孩子多喝水或流質飲品，可嘗試加冰棍或冰塊
- 不要洗酒精浴
- 等孩子痊癒後，定時帶孩子看醫生打預防針

如果孩子出現熱性驚厥 (癲癇)，該怎麼辦？
發燒不一定會引起驚厥 (癲癇)。只有不到百分之五的兒童因為發燒引起驚厥，而且大多發生在幼兒身上。熱性驚厥通常不會造成傷害，但如果出現這種情況，您還是要及時帶孩子去看醫生。

應該甚麼時候打電話給醫生？

如果孩子出現以下情況，要馬上打電話給醫生：

- 孩子不滿三個月，體溫超過華氏 100.4 度或攝氏 38 度
- 孩子發燒，而且看起來病得很嚴重：
 - 煩躁或昏睡難醒
 - 頭痛或脖子僵硬
 - 呼吸困難
 - 無法吞食
 - 不想喝東西
 - 皮疹
 - 癲癇發作

如果以下情況出現，請在 24 小時內打電話找醫生：

- 三到六個月的孩子，體溫超過華氏 100.4 度或攝氏 38 度
- 六個月以上的孩子，體溫超過華氏 104 度或攝氏 40 度
- 持續發燒超過三天
- 沒有平時那麼好動愛玩
- 不想喝水或飲料
- 有其他顧慮或問題要找醫生

資料來源：

- Children's Hospital Boston
- MedlinePlus

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