

# What to Do When Your Child Has a Fever



## Use a thermometer to find out if your child has a fever

There are four methods of taking temperature: rectum, mouth, ear and armpit. The instructions that come with your thermometer will tell you which method to use.

Before and after each use, clean the tip of the thermometer. Use soap and water or rubbing alcohol, then rinse with cool water. Do not use the same thermometer for mouth and rectal temperatures.

## Which thermometer method to use (by age)

### Birth to 3 months

Rectal only

### 3 months to 4 years

Armpit or rectal

### 4 years and older

Mouth, armpit or ear

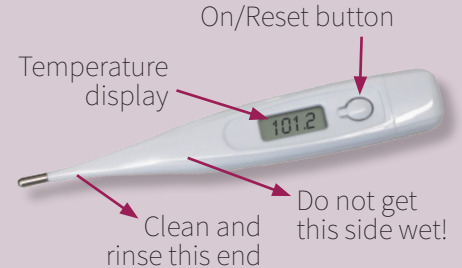
### A fever in a child is:

Armpit*	99.0 F (37.2 C) or higher
Mouth	100.0 F (37.8 C) or higher
Rectal	100.4 F (38 C) or higher
Ear	100.4 F (38 C) or higher

\*Armpit temperatures are least accurate

### If you have a digital ear thermometer

- Only use if your child is 6 months or older
- Earwax or a curved ear canal can decrease accuracy



*If in doubt about the results, take a rectal temperature*



# How to treat a fever

- While fever is a sign of sickness, it can help fight infections
- The fever may not need to be treated if a child is over 6 months old, drinking enough fluids, sleeping well and able to play

## Birth to 3 months

Do not give medication until child has been checked by a doctor

## 3 months to 4 years

Tylenol  
(Acetaminophen)  
Never give more than what the label says

## 4 years and older

Advil or Children's Motrin  
(Ibuprofen)  
Follow label instructions

**Do not give aspirin to any child age 18 months or younger**  
**Consult your child's doctor before giving children medication**





**Have health questions?**  
**Call HPSM's Nurse Advice Line**  
**1-833-846-8773**



Get answers 24/7 from  
Licensed Registered Nurses

## When to get medical help

### Call your child's doctor if your child:

-  Has a fever for 3 or more days and is not getting better
-  Has a fever, is throwing up, has diarrhea and is not drinking much, or is urinating less and getting weaker

### Go to the Emergency Room right away if your child:

-  Is 3 months old or younger and has a temperature of 100.4 or higher
-  Has trouble breathing