

Memo:

Pediatric Emergency Department (Pronto Soccorso) tel. 0498213515



Salus Pueri Foundation has been active since 1992 and its main goal is to raise funds to support the activities of the Pediatric Hospital of Padua. Every day we work to make our hospital a welcoming and child and family friendly place, and to promote a culture where humanization is at the heart of care.

These parents information guides of the Pediatric Emergency Department of Padua have been created to facilitate the provision of clear and complete information to parents whose kids are experiencing acute health issues.

The parents information guides are not intended to replace the recommendations and tailored advice provided by your pediatrician.

Support the Pediatric Hospital of Padua!

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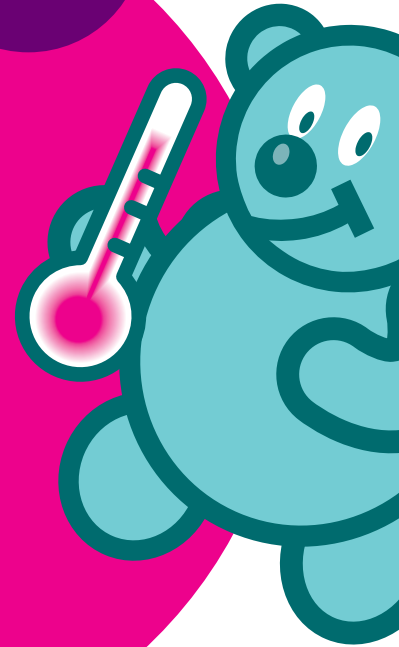


Dipartimento per la Salute
della Donna e del Bambino
- Pronto Soccorso Pediatrico -



**FONDAZIONE
SALUS PUERI**

Fever



in collaboration with **fimp**,
Federazione Italiana Medici Pediatri Padova

Parents
information
guides

Fever



What is fever and how is it measured?

Fever is defined as an underarm temperature > 37.5° C. Body temperature should preferably be measured under the arm using a digital thermometer. Other measurement methods may be more difficult to use, are less accurate and more disturbing to the child.

Background information

- Fever is one of the most common symptoms in children and, in most cases, it is caused by infections (mostly viral) that **resolve by themselves**. Antibiotics may be necessary in selected cases, based on the prescription by a doctor.
- Fever itself is usually not harmful, in fact it helps the body's immune system fight off the infection.
- Fever, when isolated and not accompanied by other symptoms, is not worrisome and you should not aim at aggressively treating the fever itself. It is more important for you to monitor any symptoms of the underlying illness, rather than fever itself.
- The degree of fever and the response to antipyretic medications (medications used to lower the fever) are not usually associated with the severity of the disease, i.e. **a high fever it is not necessarily the sign of a serious illness!**
- Fever is more likely to be the sign of a serious infection **in unvaccinated children**.

When to seek urgent medical care:

- If the baby is less than 6 months old (particularly in the first month of life)
- If the child presents unusual behavior (weakness, feeling unwell when the fever lowers, irritable or crying, more sleepy than usual, refusing to drink, refusing to play ...)
- If the child presents associated symptoms (difficulty breathing, vomiting, numerous fecal discharges, pain ...)

You should also call/see your pediatrician when the fever lasts for more than 48-72 hours, independently of whether it is associated with other symptoms.

Care at home

- Give your child frequent small drinks. Many children refuse to eat when they have a fever. This is not a problem, as long as they stay hydrated. Give extra breastfeeds if the child is breastfed.
- Avoid extra-heating your home environment; dress your child with light clothing. If your child feels cold or is shivering add another layer of clothing or a blanket until they feel better.
- **Use antipyretic medications if your child is miserable, feels unwell or is in discomfort because of the fever.**



Remember: the goal of using antipyretic medications is NOT to lower the temperature per se, but rather to make your child feel better.

Medications

The only medications that are effective and have a good safety profile for the treatment of fever in children are Paracetamol and Ibuprofen (your pediatrician will help you choose on the best product and formulation for your child).

Dosages:

Paracetamol	dose	frequency
orally	10-15 mg/kg/dose	every 6 hours (max 4 times a day)
rectally	20 mg/kg/dose	every 6 hours (max 4 times a day)

Ibuprofen *	dose	frequency
orally	10 mg/kg/dose	every 8 hours (max 3 times a day)
rectally	10 mg/kg/dose	every 8 hours (max 3 times a day)

* from 3 months old and with a full stomach

When using antipyretic medications you should remember that:

- **it is usually enough to use only one medication** and it is not recommended to alternate one medication with the other on a regular basis
- the two medications should not be used simultaneously
- after you give your child one of the two antipyretic medications mentioned above, you should consider giving the other one only if the child is still miserable or still feels unwell before you can administer the first medication again, based on the minimum time intervals allowed between administrations (see dosages section above).

Cooling with ice or cold water should be avoided. Wiping your child with a sponge soaked in warm water is not effective per se in lowering the fever.