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# Fever and Children



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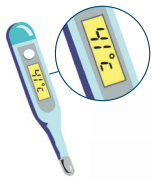
## What Causes Fever?

Fever is not an illness. It is a symptom that naturally occurs when the body immune system fights against infection.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Is it true that the higher the body temperature, the more serious the illness?

No. The body temperature is not directly proportional to the severity of illness. But high temperature ( $>41^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) may be in itself a serious condition. Seek medical help immediately if you experience high temperature.



### Will fever cause brain damage?

The actual cause of brain damage is encephalitis or meningitis, with fever as one of the symptoms. Damage to the brain is minimal unless the temperature exceeds  $41^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

### Will fever cause seizures?

Febrile seizures are seizures caused by fever. They are common in children aged 1 to 2, triggered by a rise of body temperature over  $38^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Statistics show that 50% of cases are hereditary and others of unknown causes. Most children do not have febrile seizures.

### What can I do when my child has a febrile seizure?

Stay calm, and try to lay your child down on one side to avoid airway obstruction. Remove any object that may injure him. Seek medical help immediately. DO NOT try to stop the seizure movements as this may cause fractures. Also DO NOT try to force anything into your child's mouth, for it increases the risk of injury to the teeth or jawbone. A dislodged tooth may obstruct the airway and lead to suffocation.



## Home Care for Fever

1. Remove excess clothing or blankets
2. Open the window and keep the room well-ventilated. Keep the environment comfortably cool using an electric fan or air-conditioner.
3. Bathe or sponge your child in lukewarm water to help cool down the fever (DO NOT use alcohol rubs)
4. Let your child take rest and drink a lot of water
5. Help your child take prescribed medication. But the effect is only temporary. The body temperature will only return to normal when the illness is treated.

## Seek Medical Help Immediately

1. If your child is sluggish and weak, showing signs of irritability, confusion, loss of appetite, inactivity, continuous vomiting and diarrhoea
2. If the fever exceeds  $40^{\circ}\text{C}$  and your child feels lethargic
3. If your child shows symptoms of dehydration, such as dry and chapped lips, poor skin turgor and sunken eyes