

TEMPERATURE

Underarm temperature below
34.5°C (94°F)

Baby is dangerously
chilled. Call doctor
immediately.

Underarm temperature between
37.5°C and 38.9°C (99.5° and 102°F)
in child over 12 months

Try to keep it down (see
How to bring down your
child's temperature). If it
persists longer than 24
hours, consult doctor.

Underarm temperature over
● 37.5°C (99.5°F) in baby under
three months.
● 37.8°C (100°F) in three-to
12-month-old.
● 38.9°C (102°F) in child over
12 months

Try to bring it down (see
How to bring down your
child's temperature). If
you can't, call doctor
immediately.

How to bring down your child's temperature

Babies can't control their body temperature very well and a high temperature, or a sudden rise, can sometimes cause a fit called a febrile convulsion. If your baby seems unwell or unusually hot, take his temperature. If it's high or if it seems to be rising it's important to get it down.

Take off his clothes, leaving him in just a vest and nappy – and don't cover him up with heavy blankets or a duvet.

● Make sure the room isn't too warm (if he has a very high temperature, an electric fan can be useful).

● For babies aged three months and over, give the recommended dose of infant paracetamol (eg. Calpol). (Babies of

two months can have it only if they have a temperature following their immunisation – in all other circumstances it should be given to babies under three months only if your doctor advises it.)

● Give plenty of fluids

● In babies too young for paracetamol and/or older babies and children whose temperature reaches the figure shown above in red, sponge the face, body, arms and legs with tepid (not cold) water. Allow it to dry in the air. Take your child's temperature every 10 minutes. If necessary, carry on sponging for about half an hour – if his temperature is still not coming down, consult your doctor immediately.

CRYING

If it's different from usual, or if it's
combined with other symptoms or
illness or pain

Consult doctor.

If it's colic or teething

Look in a baby book or
ask your health visitor
how you can help your
baby.

If you feel you can't cope with your
baby's crying any more

You need help – talk to
your partner, your GP or
health visitor, or phone
Cry-SIS on 071-404 50 1
for support.

VOMITING

If it follows a blow to the head.
Emergency help needed.

Single bout.

Keep an eye on him.

How severe is it?

Mild, with a good fluid intake.

If it lasts
hours, or
soon as

Quite severe, not keeping much
fluid down.

If it lasts more than six
hours, or
soon as possible.

Becoming dehydrated or vomiting
accompanied by fever, pain or
drowsiness.

Call doctor immediately.

Projectile (very forceful)
vomiting after two
successive feeds in baby
of two to eight weeks
could mean pyloric
stenosis, (blockage in
small intestine) which
requires urgent operation.

DIARRHOEA

Stools red and jelly-like, with
severe abdominal pain –
indicates bowel blockage
called intussusception.
Emergency help needed.

Mild with good fluid intake.

Consult doctor if it
lasts more than
24 hours.

Severe.

Consult doctor if it
lasts more than
six hours

Blood in stools, or child becoming
dehydrated

Call doctor immediately

How to prevent dehydration

Babies can rapidly become dehydrated when they lose more fluid than they are taking in, for instance if they are suffering from diarrhoea or vomiting, or if they are feverish and sweating a lot.

It's important that your baby keeps drinking, to prevent dehydration – feed him small amounts of fluid very frequently. The best thing to give is a special rehydrating drink, available from the chemist or on prescription from your doctor. Stop

bottle-feeding but if you're breastfeeding, carry on.

Call the doctor if your child has been vomiting or has diarrhoea and is also refusing to drink.

These are the signs that a baby or child is becoming dehydrated:

- Infrequent, small amounts of dark yellow urine
- Dull eyes
- Dry tongue
- Listlessness
- Sunken fontanelles in a young baby

MENINGITIS

These are the following two or
symptoms. It may be the first
clues to meningitis.

- Stiff neck
- Headache
- Drowsiness

- High temperature
- Intense dislike of light
- Rash of flat, dark red spots
- Refusing to drink
- Irritability

Call doctor immediately

COUGHS, COLDS AND BREATHING PROBLEMS

COUGHS

If a cough is causing sleepless
nights, if it hasn't improved in three
days, if you're worried about a
chesty cough

Consult doctor.

If you suspect your baby has
whooping cough.

Call doctor immediately.

COLDS

If it's stopping your baby from
feeding properly, or if you suspect
there's another infection on top of
the cold.

Consult doctor

Straightforward cold.

Look in baby book or
ask health visitor how
you can help your
baby.

Noisy breathing due to blocked nose
or cold.

Keep an eye on him.

Noise from throat when breathing in,
or wheezing when breathing out

Call doctor immediately

BREATHING PROBLEMS

Breathing rapidly, with difficulty; pale
complexion and lips turning blue

**Emergency help
needed.**