



PREMIER MEDICAL ASSOCIATES

Fevers

Most parents experience a great deal of anxiety when their child has a fever. For the most part, this is unnecessary. Fever is a normal response of the body to infection. Both bacterial and viral illnesses cause fever. The body raises its temperature in order to rev up its metabolism so it can fight the infection. Some authorities believe that our society is “fever phobic” and that we actually prolong illnesses by treating fevers. However, most of us know that children (and adults) are miserable when their temperatures are elevated and fever-reducing medications (acetaminophen and ibuprofen) can make them feel better.

A few pointers when dealing with fevers:

- A fever is a temperature over 100.4 degrees
- Rectal thermometers are most accurate in children under two years of age. Axillary (under the arm) is acceptable in toddlers if held in place for five minutes. Ear thermometers have a great deal of variability and are least accurate (even wrong at times). Tactile temperatures (feeling the forehead) are not helpful.
- The degree of fever is not as significant as how your child is responding to you. A temperature of 104-105 is not an emergency- dress the child in light clothing, administer Tylenol or Motrin and make sure the child gets plenty of fluids. Do not chill the child- they start to shiver and that is how the body raises its temperature, which is the opposite of what we want to do. Fever itself will not harm the brain (remember, it is a normal response). A few children will have seizures when they have a fever. Though frightening, these are usually not harmful and do not mean something else is wrong. Call if this occurs.
- Most illnesses begin with a fever. If the fever lasts longer than 72 hours, please call us. The exception is in infants under two months of age. ***If your child is less than 2 months old and has a rectal temperature over 100.4 rectally, call us immediately.***
- Tylenol is the first drug you should use to treat a fever. It has fewer side effects and is easier on the stomach. Never use ibuprofen if your child is vomiting or has diarrhea.
- You need to allow at least one hour for most medications to work.

Patient Information

Medical Disclaimer

Premier Medical Associates PC offers the information on this Web site for general educational purposes only. This information should not be used for diagnosis, nor should it be considered a replacement for consultation with a healthcare professional. If you have questions or concerns about your health or the health of your child or dependant, please contact your healthcare provider immediately.