

Fever: temperature guideline

41°C/106°F = Medical emergency, life is at risk.

40.5°C/105°F = Cause for concern – call for medical assistance.

40°C/104°F = OK for a short period – consult with doctor

39°C/102°F = A good fever, normal immune reaction

37.6°C/99.7°F = upper edge of normal body temperature range

37°C/98.6°F = average normal body temperature

36.1°C/97°F = lower edge of normal body temperature range

36°C/97°F = Feeling cold.

35°C/95°F = Just above hypothermia. Consult with doctor.

34°C/93°F = hypothermia. Call for medical assistance

32°C/90°F = Medical emergency, life is at risk.

The average normal temperature in a healthy human is 37°C/98.6°F, but this can vary, and you can check your children's healthy range by taking their temperature when they are well.

Most adults and children can run a fever of up to 40°C/104°F for a short period. It is normal for healthy infants and children to throw high fevers of 39.5°C/103°F and over with an infection. A temperature of 40.5°C/105°F is cause for concern. When it passes over 41°C/106°F life is at risk.

Fevers normally peak at night time and drop by the following morning, and a temperature in the evening may recur on subsequent evenings. A drop in temperature in the morning doesn't mean the fever is over. It can rise and fall over a few days, so keep your child at home in bed if they have had a fever the night before. Delirium, tantrums and hallucinations can occur, which are distressing but not dangerous. Keep a close eye on your child and seek help if you are concerned.

Be guided by your child. They instinctively know what's best for them, whether to uncover or wrap up warm. Sponge your child with a cool, damp cloth, on the forehead/face, and one limb at a time, replacing the cooled limb under the bed covers. Avoid overstimulation, so switch off the telly and the music, draw the curtains, dim the lights. Avoid tea, coffee, cola, sweet and sugary food. Keep calm, and keep the patient calm. Read them books, give frequent sips of water, and plenty of attention.

Keep your child well hydrated, especially if they are vomiting or have diarrhoea. You can make a basic rehydration fluid of 30 ml sugar and 2.5 ml salt to 1 litre water. Normally, plain water will do. And if your young 'un doesn't want to drink, try popping them in a warm bath with no soap. This water may appeal to them! <http://www.webmd.boots.com/children/baby/guide/dehydration-children>