Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Raised Temperature in Children

Version number: **7**
Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

Raised Temperature in Children

Patient Information

Rainbow Ward

- Author ID: Ward Leader Rainbow Ward
- Leaflet ref: CH 002
- Version: 7
- Leaflet title: Raised Temperature in Children
- Last review: December 2023
- Expiry Date: December 2025

What is a high temperature?

A high temperature is any abnormal rise in the body's temperature, usually caused by an infection. The medical name for temperature is Pyrexia and you may hear this name if your child is admitted to hospital. The temperature is usually taken in the ear or under the arm.

A normal temperature is 36°C – 37.5°C

When the body is fighting off a virus or bacteria, it makes you feel ill, and causes a high temperature. It is very common to have a high temperature when you are ill; however, the level of the temperature does not always tell you how serious the illness is.

A sudden rise in temperature may cause convulsions in children between the ages of six months and five years, due to the nervous system being immature. This is called a febrile convulsion: if this happens to your child, a doctor should see them. Controlling or reducing high temperatures in small children may help to prevent convulsions.

How to reduce a high temperature

- Increase the number of drinks your child normally has. Do not worry if your child is not eating as normal.

- Leave your child dressed only in a nappy or cool cotton clothing. Try to keep hands and feet warm as this does help with overall cooling. If the hands and feet are cold the body will work harder to warm them up, thus

increasing the temperature. Use socks and mittens to warm up hands and feet.

- Do not wrap your child in blankets or a duvet.

- Do not place your child in front of a fire, even though they may be shivering. Shivering can be due to a high temperature.

- If you have a fan, put this in the room near to your child, but not directly blowing on them and make sure it is out of their reach. This will cool the air around them.

- Give Paracetamol as directed on the bottle. It can be given every four to six hours but no more than four doses in 24 hours.

Or

- Ibuprofen as directed on the bottle. This should be given with caution to children with asthma or stomach complaints – check with a doctor first. Ibuprofen can be given every six to eight hours but no more than three doses in 24 hours.

You can either give Paracetamol OR Ibuprofen, but they should **not** be given together.

If Ibuprofen alone and Paracetamol alone do not lower your child's temperature, consider alternating Paracetamol and Ibuprofen. When alternating the medicine always keep to the recommended gaps between each dose. Medicines should only be given when needed.

If you need further advice you should speak to your GP.

Contact information

If you have any questions or queries which we have not covered in this leaflet, the staff will be pleased to answer your questions as clearly and honestly as they can.

Telephone 01942 778762 or 01942 778763 – Rainbow ward is open 24 hours.

Please note that we can only give specific advice where we have recently been involved in the care of a child.



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