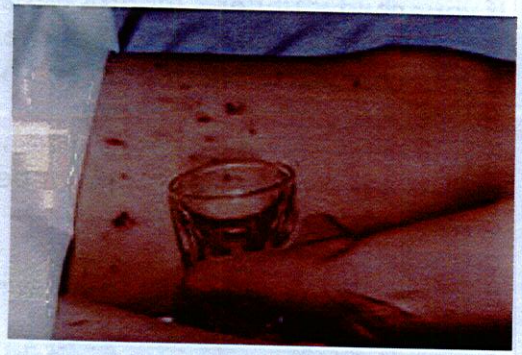
- Is confused or unaware of their surroundings
- Has mottled skin
- Has difficulty in breathing
- Has a fit or seizure
- Has a skin rash that does not go away with pressure.

You can test the skin rash using the glass test as demonstrated here:



(Courtesy of Meningitis Now www.meningitisnow.org)

What we expect to happen over the next couple of days

You can expect your child to be tired and grizzly and this is often most noticeable when the temperature is high. They should also perk up in between times and play for a bit. The improvement times should increase as the body rids itself of the infection and they should get back to normal eating and drinking and playing. Make an appointment with your GP if fevers persist for more than five days.

People you can contact are:

GP Surgery on.....
(Please insert your own surgery number here)

GP Out-of Hours: (After 6.30pm and before 8am). Ring **111** and you can speak to a doctor. If necessary, your child can be seen at one of their centres.

Bristol City Walk-in Centre at Broadmead Medical Centre located in Boots (Mon-Sat 8am-8pm, Sundays and Bank Holiday 11am-5pm) on: **0117 954 9828**

South Bristol NHS Community Hospital Urgent Care Centre (Every day 8am-8pm) on: **0117 342 9692**
Visit www.nhs.uk to find your nearest centre.

If your child is seriously ill, you may be asked to attend the Children's Hospital Emergency Department.

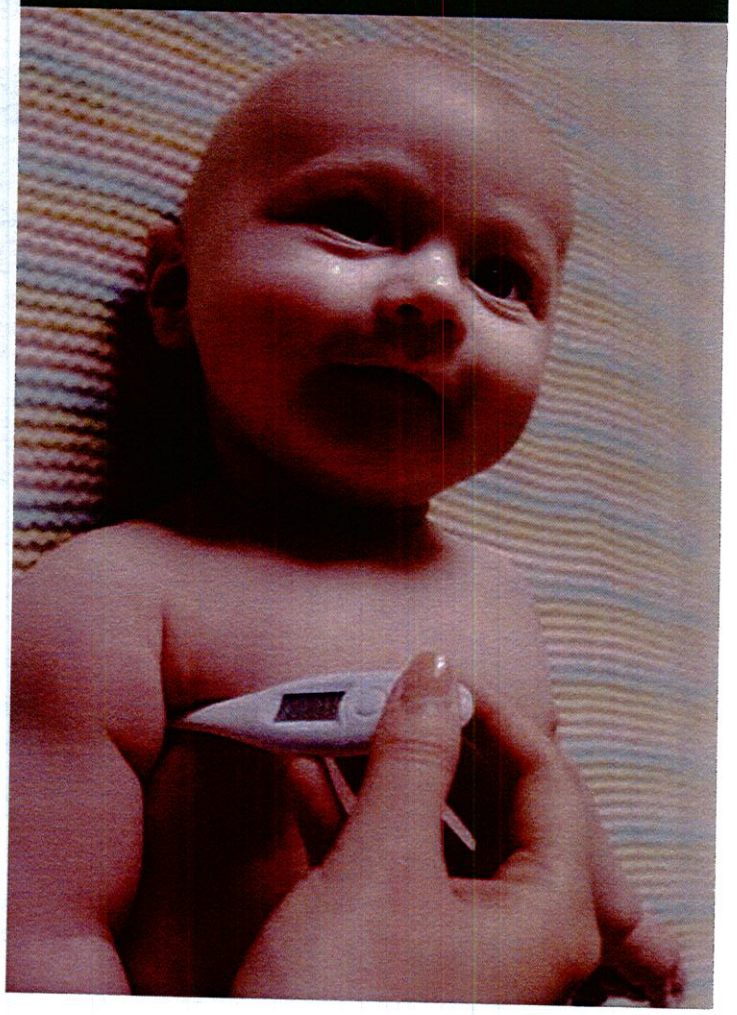
For further copies of this leaflet, or if you would like it in other formats or languages, please contact 0117 900 2384.

Produced in partnership with Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group, North Bristol NHS Trust and University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust.

End date: June 2016

NHS

Parent's guide to a feverish illness



What is a feverish illness?

A fever in a child means a temperature of over 38°C. Fevers are usually the result of viral infections that cause coughs, colds, sore throats, ear infections and other common childhood illnesses such as chicken pox and stomach bugs. Occasionally fevers are caused by bacterial infections and may require treatment with antibiotics.

Fever is the body's normal reaction to fighting an infection and makes it more difficult for the bacteria and viruses that cause infections to survive. Fevers themselves are not harmful and should be seen simply as a sign that your child has an infection. If your child has a fever and looks well, it is OK to keep an eye on them and make sure they have plenty to drink.

Measuring temperature

If you're concerned that your baby has a raised temperature, the best first step is to check their temperature with a thermometer. In children under 6 months old you should use an underarm thermometer.

In children older than 6 months it is OK to use an ear (or tympanic) thermometer but they are not reliable in younger children as they can give misleadingly low readings.

We do not recommend strip-type thermometers that are held on the child's forehead as they are not accurate and mercury in glass thermometers are no longer used because they can break, releasing small shards of glass and highly poisonous mercury.

Treating a fever

If your child has a fever, it's important to give them plenty of cool water to drink. Even if your child isn't thirsty, try to get them to drink small amounts frequently to keep their fluid levels up.

To help reduce your child's temperature you can also:

- Keep them cool (if the environment is warm) – for example, you can just cover them with a lightweight sheet (but they should be appropriately dressed for their surroundings)
- Keep their room cool: 18°C is about right (open a window if you need to)
- Give them children's paracetamol or ibuprofen – you can give them both at the same time, but if one doesn't work you may want to try the other later. These are painkillers that also help to lower fever
- Do not sponge your child with water as this does not reduce the fever

Remember that medicines to reduce fever aren't always necessary – for example, if your child isn't distressed by the fever or any pain. If you do choose to use these medicines always read the patient information leaflet that comes with the medication to find the right dose and frequency for your child's age.

When to contact your GP or call 111

- If your child is under 3 months old and has a temperature of 38°C or above
- If your child is 3-6 months old and has a temperature of 39°C or above
- If your child is over 6 months old and, as well as a fever, has other signs of being unwell, such as floppiness and drowsiness
- If your child does not pass urine at least twice in 24 hours
- If your child has a persistent irritable cry despite comforting and painkillers like paracetamol or ibuprofen
- If the fever has persisted for more than 5 days
- If you have concerns (even if you have seen your doctor today) or your child is worsening.

When to call 999

You should call an ambulance immediately if your child:

- Is lifeless, unconsciousness, drowsy or difficult to wake