

When your child has a FEVER: tips from Dr. Den

Call your MD if your child has a fever (100.4F/38C)

AND:

- is 3 months or younger
- has had a seizure
- is vomiting and can't keep fluids down
- no urine for 6-8 hours
- is very sleepy and difficult to arouse
- is truly inconsolable
- is acting confused / not making eye contact
- has any trouble breathing
- develops a rash
- has pain or stiffness in the back of the neck when touching chin to chest
- it has lasted more than 4-5 days
- seems better but then suddenly worse
- you are very worried

Fever Facts:

- Fever is the body's natural response to infection. Fever can slow down bacteria and viruses and increase our body's immune response.
- Fever reducers reduce fevers, but don't treat the infection (acetaminophen/ibuprofen).
- Fever can actually help your child get over their illness faster.

When to treat a fever?

- Look at how your child is acting, NOT how high the fever is.
- If your child is too uncomfortable to sleep, give a fever reducer.
- If your child is too uncomfortable to drink anything, give a fever reducer.

Focus on the fluids!

It's ok if they don't want to eat much...it's all about hydration.

Drinks with electrolytes are best, and preferably NOT something full of too much sugar, artificial flavors and other yuck ingredients. Here are some of my favorites:

- Coconut Water - Full of electrolytes and the right amount of sugar. Drink as is, add a little unsweetened juice for taste, make into natural jello, fruit juice popsicles or smoothies.
- Herbal Teas - Chamomile is soothing and peppermint cools the body. You can add honey if your child is over 1 year old, which is also soothing. Drink warm or cool, or make into natural jello or popsicles.
- Bone Broth - Drink like tea, or use in soups or to make rice or pasta.

Herbal Medicine and Acupuncture

- Elderberry syrup is great for kids with fever, as it has antiviral properties. 1-2 teaspoons 4x/day is a good dose for kids. Cut back dose for loose stool.
- There are different Chinese herbal formulas for fever and infection, but as each case is different, please contact me to find the most appropriate formula for your child.
- An acupuncture treatment is a great way to help the body fight off an infection. Needle-free options are also very effective for kids who aren't ready for the "taps."
- At home, you can massage (acupressure) on the point called "Large Intestine 4," which is located on the tender spot on the hand between the thumb and pointer finger.

Essential Oils

Here are some great ways to use essential oils for a fever:

- Diffused - either use a cool mist diffuser or simply place 5 drops in a bowl of water to fill the air with aroma
- In the bath - place 5-10 drops in your child's bath
- Massaged - add 5 drops to a carrier oil (I love organic jojoba oil, but you can really use whatever you have on hand), and massage onto the feet, back, chest, really anywhere but be careful not to get it into the eyes
- Use Lavender for calming, Peppermint for cooling, and Cinnamon for warming when chills are present.