



Bayside Medical Group, Inc.

www.baysidemed.com

FEVER PHOBIA

## Fever Phobia!

Most parents get very frightened when their children get fevers. As a matter of fact, the majority of calls we receive when we are on call at night are about fevers. Is this fear justified? Or are we too afraid of fevers? Do we suffer from FEVERPHOBIA?

Actually, it's true; many of us are too afraid of fevers. In most cases, fever is simply the body's way of responding to an infection. Fever makes a child uncomfortable, but it usually is not dangerous at all.

Fever itself does not cause brain damage. Usually a fever goes up and then just stops at a certain level; even a fever as high as 106 is not harmful to the body or brain! Fever

may even be helpful. Most physicians believe that a fever is part of the immune system's way of fighting the germs that cause the illness, and actually helps get rid of these germs faster.

Why then do we pay attention to fevers? Because even though fevers are not in themselves dangerous, we do worry about what is causing the fever. Most times it is an infection—sometimes with a virus, which we don't treat with antibiotics; and sometimes with bacteria (like "strep"), which we do treat with antibiotics. Our job as practitioners is to figure out which kinds of infection it is, and to do the right thing. But most of the time, even if there is an infection that we will want to treat with antibiotics, there is no great urgency.

So, most of the time you DO NOT have to panic about a fever. Do you have to "break the fever"? No. Do you worry if you give acetaminophen and the fever is not very responsive? Not necessarily.

Why do we give feverish children acetaminophen or ibuprofen? There is one main reason—to make them more comfortable. Just getting a fever down doesn't cure anything.

Now, when do you worry about a fever and call us immediately? If your child is 2 months old or younger, we worry more about a fever than with older children. If your young infant has a fever of 100.5 degrees or more, we want you to call us immediately. For older ages, we certainly want to hear at once if your child has a fever of 104.5 degrees or more. Other warning signs are extreme irritability, a stiff neck, or little spots of blood under the skin (what we call "petechiae"). Moreover, if your child just seems very sick, you should definitely call us.

Sometime young children who have a rapid rise of temperature get febrile (with fever) convulsions, or seizures. These cause no permanent harm in the great majority of cases, but they are very frightening for parents.

If your child has had a febrile seizure in the past, you will want to treat the fever more aggressively than with most children. And if your child should have a febrile seizure, remember, you should call us, but in the great majority of cases it will cause no lasting damage.

Now a word about how to treat fevers. Never use aspirin! Aspirin has been connected with a severe disease of the brain and liver in children and teens, called "Reye's Syndrome". Instead, use acetaminophen (Tylenol, Tempra, etc.) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, etc.). You can also soak your child in a lukewarm bath (not cold, just lukewarm), but sponging down with alcohol is dangerous, so never do that. Finally, a child with a fever should be lightly dressed. Do not dress your child warmly to help him or her "sweat it out".

(See back for dosing charts.)



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**Acetaminophen (Tylenol) Dosing Chart**

*Give every 4-6 hours as needed, no more than 5 times in 24 hours*

Weight	Milligram Dosage	Tylenol Infant Drops 80mg/0.8ml 1 dropper=0.8ml	Tylenol Children's Liquid 160mg/5ml	Tylenol Chewable Tablets 80mg	Tylenol Junior Strength 160mg	Tylenol Adult Tablets 325mg
6-11 lbs	40 mg	½ dropper (0.4 ml)	¼ tsp (1.25 ml)			
12-17 lbs	80 mg	1 dropper (0.8 ml)	½ tsp (2.5 ml)			
18-23 lbs	120 mg	1 ½ dropper (1.2 ml)	¾ tsp (3.75 ml)			
24-29 lbs	160 mg	2 droppers (1.6 ml)	1 tsp (5 ml)	2 tablets	1 tablet	
30-35 lbs	200 mg	2 ½ droppers (2 ml)	1 ¼ tsp (6.25 ml)	2 ½ tablets	1 tablet	
36-41 lbs	240 mg	3 droppers (2.4 ml)	1 ½ tsp (7.5 ml)	3 tablets	1 ½ tablets	
42-47 lbs	280 mg	3 ½ droppers (2.8 ml)	1 ¾ tsp (8.75 ml)	3 ½ tablets	1 ½ tablets	
48-59 lbs	320 mg	4 droppers (3.2 ml)	2 tsp (10 ml)	4 tablets	2 tablets	1 tablet
60-71 lbs	400 mg	Use liquid or tablets	2 ½ tsp (12.5 ml)	5 tablets	2 ½ tablets	1 tablet
72-83 lbs	480 mg		3 tsp (15 ml)	6 tablets	3 tablets	1 ½ tabs
84-95 lbs	560 mg		3 ½ tsp (17.5 ml)	7 tablets	3 ½ tablets	1 ½ tabs
> 95	640 mg		4 tsp (20 ml)	8 tablets	4 tablets	2 tablets

**Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) Dosing Chart**

*Give every 6-8 hours, as needed, no more than 4 times in 24 hours*

Weight	Milligram Dosage	Ibuprofen Advil/Motrin Drops 50mg/1.25ml	Ibuprofen Children's Liquid 100mg/5ml	Ibuprofen Chewable Tablets 50mg	Ibuprofen Junior Strength 100mg	Ibuprofen Adult Tablets 200mg
9-12 lbs >3 mo.	25 mg	0.625 ml				
12-17 lbs	50 mg	1.25 ml	½ tsp (2.5 ml)			
18-23 lbs	75 mg	1.875 ml	¾ tsp (3.75 ml)			
24-29 lbs	100 mg	1.875 + 0.625 ml	1 tsp (5 ml)	2 tablets	1 tablet	
30-35 lbs	125 mg	1.875 + 1.25 ml	1 ¼ tsp	2 ½ tablets	1 tablet	
36-41 lbs	150 mg	1.875 + 1.875 ml	1 ½ tsp	3 tablets	1 ½ tablets	
42-47 lbs	175 mg	1.875 + 1.875 + 0.625 ml	1 ¾ tsp	3 ½ tablets	1 ½ tablets	
48-59 lbs	200 mg	1.875 + 1.875 + 1.25 ml	2 tsp	4 tablets	2 tablets	1 tablet
60-71 lbs	250 mg	Use liquid or tablets	2 ½ tsp	5 tablets	2 ½ tablets	1 tablet
72-83 lbs	300 mg		3 tsp	6 tablets	3 tablets	1 ½ tabs
84-95 lbs	350 mg		3 ½ tsp	7 tablets	3 ½ tablets	1 ½ tabs
> 95	400 mg		4 tsp	8 tablets	4 tablets	2 tablets