

# Idaho Falls Pediatrics

## **Fever**

### **What is a Fever?**

A fever is any temperature greater than 100° degrees (measured in the armpit).

### **What is the cause?**

Fevers are NEVER dangerous. They DO NOT cause brain damage! They are simply a symptom of an infection. If anything fevers help in the infection fighting process and are often our first clue there is an infection in the body.

### **Children over 2 months old:**

A fever in a child over 2 months old is not concerning as long as the child is doing well (breathing, drinking and urinating well). Viral infections are infections that do not respond to antibiotics. Viral infections can cause fevers that last 3 to 4 days, and as long as your child is doing well... we can watch, wait and see what other symptoms surface. If your child's symptoms worsen or you are concerned your child is becoming lethargic, dehydrated, or they are having difficulty breathing, your child should be seen and evaluated by a physician. The symptoms of a fever help us to understand where the infection is coming from and what may be the best way to treat it.

### **Children under 2 months old:**

A fever in a child under 2 months old is a very different story! An older child with a serious infection will usually look seriously ill. That is not necessarily the case with an infant or baby under two months old. These infants or babies can have very serious even dangerous infections and may only show minimal signs. Therefore, the rule with babies under two months old is to contact a doctor immediately (even in the middle of the night) should they have a fever or temperature above 100° degrees in the armpit or a rectal temperature greater 100.5° degrees. A fever in a newborn is considered to be very serious until proven otherwise. After your child is 2 months old we do not get nearly as worried about a fever if everything else looks good and the fever doesn't last longer than 3 or 4 days.

## **Treatment for a FEVER:**

- Tylenol IS NOT recommended until a child is at least 2 months old.
- Motrin or Ibuprofen IS NOT recommended until the child is at least 6 months old.

## **When should I call Idaho Falls Pediatrics?**

Call IMMEDIATELY if:

- Your child is under 2 months old and has a fever
- Your baby is acting very sick.
- Your baby is lethargic or confused
- Your baby is dehydrated

Call during office hours if:

- The fever lasts more than 3 days.
- You are concerned about your child.
- You have other questions or concerns about multiple symptoms.

*\*NOTE: This information is provided as a public educational service. The information does not replace any of the instructions your physician gives you. If you have a medical emergency please call 911 or call the Hospital at (208) 529-6111. If you have questions about your child's care, please call Idaho Falls Pediatrics at (208) 522-4600.*