

Fever: How long is too long? How High is too High?

How long is Too Long? When is a fever dangerous?

In most situations a fever is a healthy response that you can manage at home without Tylenol (a.k.a. Acetaminophen, Paracetamol). However, there are some situations when a fever is a medical emergency.

For example: any involvement of breathing difficulties, blood, bones, brain inflammation (encephalitis or meningitis), eye injury, poisoning, post vaccinations, and sunstroke can be a problem. If you have ANY concerns at ANY time during your child's illness, or a sense that something is wrong (mothers' intuition) **please go to the hospital.**

How will I know if this is an emergency? Signs to watch for:

You should seek medical attention for yourself or a child under the following fever scenarios:

- If your child is 3 months old or younger and has a rectal temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher.
- If your child is 3 to 12 months old and has an oral temperature of 102.2° F (39°C).
- If your child is 2 years old or younger and has a fever that lasts longer than 24 to 48 hours.
- Adults with a fever higher than 105°F (40.5°C) or a fever over 103°F (39.5°C). that rises or lasts longer than 48 hours.
- a fever accompanied by rash and bruising
- pain while urinating
- your child seems confused, has a stiff neck, and/or won't stop crying
- has a serious pre-existing illness

Fever is:

- **A healthy response.**
- **A first responder of the immune system.** Fever is not a feature of the virus or bacteria. A high fever means a healthy immune response and is not a measure of virulence. Fever is self-regulating.
- **A unique heat environment** that prevents some viruses and bacteria from reproducing.
- **A message to the immune system** to activate special systems that are normally quiet. Suppressing the fever suppresses these unique systems from acting.

Interesting fact: Did you know that when a fever breaks (and sweat follows), a layer of 'dermcidin' is laid down? Dermcidin is an anti-microbial (antibiotic) immune system response. In chicken pox, when a fever breaks, sweat is produced and dermcidin prevents skin infections like Staphylococcus. So, wash the clothes but not the skin! (<http://www.whale.to/a/FOPTA%20fever%20chapters..pdf>)

How High is Too High?

100-102°F (37.8 - 39°C)	low grade fevers and beneficial
102-104°F (39 - 40°C)	moderate grade fevers and beneficial
Above 104°F (40°C)	high fevers and cause discomfort, but harmless
Above 105°F (40.6°C)	higher risk of bacterial infections
Above 107°F (41.7°C)	the fever itself can be harmful

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Chronic illnesses or any other health issue need the care of a qualified healthcare professional and/or qualified homeopathic practitioner. Pregnant women should not attempt any self-care without the approval of their physician.