

### Practical Things You Can Do to Help Your Child

- Check your child during the night to see if they are getting better.
- If you are concerned that your child is not improving or has new symptoms (such as a new rash) follow the advice on the front of this leaflet.
- If your child is hot to touch, take their temperature with a thermometer.
- Children with fever should not be under, or over, dressed. If your child is hot to touch remove a layer of their clothing.
- Tepid sponging is no longer recommended for the treatment of fever.
- Offer your child regular drinks (where a baby is breastfed, the best drink is breast milk).
- If your child has a fever and is due to have immunisations please consult your GP, practice nurse or health visitor for advice.
- If you need to keep your child away from nursery or school while they are unwell please notify the nursery or school (ask your health visitor, community nurse or GP if you are not sure).
- Keep a diary of symptoms.

### Using Medication to Help

- If your child is distressed or very unwell you may use Paracetamol or Ibuprofen to help them feel more comfortable - however it is not always necessary.
- Don't routinely give both Paracetamol and Ibuprofen at the same time — use one, and if your child has not improved 1-2 hours later you may want to try giving the other medication.
- Please read the instructions on the medication bottle first for dose and frequency. Be aware of the maximum dose which can be given over a 24 hour period.
- You could ask your local community pharmacist for more advice about medication.
- Never give Aspirin to a child.

### For Further Information NHS 111

To contact the NHS 111 service simply dial '111' (free from mobiles and landlines).

If you need language support or translation please inform the member of staff you speak to.

PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) for help, advice and information about NHS services. You can contact them on freephone 0800 032 0202, email northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk or text to 01670 511098.

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when it's less  
urgent than 999

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### Information for parents and carers

## How to recognise if your child is seriously ill



## How to Use This Leaflet

Lots of children get a fever (high temperature) and most of them get better by themselves. A few children with fever may have serious infections and may develop sepsis (a blood infection) that needs urgent treatment in hospital.

This leaflet is designed to help you monitor your child's condition if they have a fever. It may help you to recognise if your child is getting worse and help you know when and where to get help.

You will need to keep checking your child for changing symptoms and follow any advice given to you by health professionals.

If you are given this leaflet by a health professional they will fill in the section below with advice for you.

Child's Name: .....

Child's Age: .....

Parent/Carer Name: .....

Clinician's Name: .....

Date/Time: .....

Parental concerns: .....

Specific Safety Netting Advice from Clinician: .....

.....



## GREEN (Low Risk: Self Care Advice)

If your child does not have any of the worrying signs or symptoms listed below, use the advice on the next page to care for your child at home. It is sometimes hard to be sure about particular signs or symptoms. If you feel that your child is seriously ill or something is worrying you and is not on these lists, please **contact your GP or 111 for advice.**

## AMBER (Medium Risk: Ask for Advice)

Many (but not all) children with these symptoms are unwell and need to be seen promptly by a health professional. If your child has any of the AMBER symptoms below **contact your GP, NHS 111 or walk-in centre promptly.**

### Temperature

- Raised temperature (more than 37.5°C) for five days or more
- Shivering or shaking

### Breathing

- Nostrils flaring (changing size with each breath)
- Breathing faster than normal
- Breathing that's unusually noisy or sounds 'crackly'
- Cough that sounds like a seal barking

### Skin, Lips & Tongue

- Unusually pale skin
- Dry mouth, lips and/or tongue
- Rash that fades when pressed firmly (use a clear glass)

### Eating & Drinking

- Baby under one year who is not feeding (or taking less than half their usual amount of milk)
- Feeding or eating much less than normal
- Has vomited (been sick) more than twice in the last 24 hours
- Under one year old with vomiting and /or diarrhoea

### Toilet/Nappies

- Under one year old with more than five watery poos (diarrhoea) in the last 24 hours
- Only one wee or wet nappy in eight hours

### Activity & Body

- Less interested than usual in playing or "not quite right"
- Difficult to wake up or unusually sleepy
- Swelling of a limb or joint
- Not using/putting weight on an arm, leg, hand or foot

## RED (High Risk: Take Action)

Many (but not all) children with these features are seriously unwell. If your child has any of the RED symptoms below they need to be seen straight away in an Emergency Department (A&E). **Dial '999' for an ambulance if necessary.**

### Temperature

- Temperature over 38°C in babies under three months
- Temperature over 39°C in babies aged three to six months
- Any high temperature in a child who cannot be encouraged to show interest in anything
- Low temperature (below 36°C, check three times in a ten minute period)

### Breathing

- Finding it much harder to breathe than normal – looks like they are working hard
- Making 'grunting' noises with every breath (in newborns this may sound like a lamb bleating)
- Very fast breathing (more than one breath each second in babies under one year)
- Can't say more than a few words at once (for older children who normally talk)
- Breathing that obviously 'pauses'

### Skin, Lips & Tongue

- Skin is blue, mottled (purplish, red) or very pale
- Lips or tongue are bluish
- Eyes look 'sunken'
- Hands and feet are unusually cold to touch
- Rash that does NOT fade when pressed firmly (use a clear glass)

### Eating & Drinking

- Baby under one month old with no interest in feeding
- Not drinking for more than eight hours (when awake)
- Extremely thirsty or unable to keep fluids down
- Persistently vomiting for more than 24 hours
- Bloody, black or brown vomit/sick

### Toilet/Nappies

- Not had a wee or wet nappy for 12 hours

### Activity & Body

- Soft spot on a baby's head is bulging
- Child is floppy
- Not responding to family or carers, or very irritable
- Weak, 'high pitched' or continuous crying in a younger child
- Hard to wake up, won't stay awake or doesn't seem to recognise you
- Stiff neck, especially when trying to look up and down
- Older children who are confused
- The child has a seizure (a fit)