

Jenny Lind Children's Hospital Patient Information Leaflet for Febrile Convulsions

You have been given this leaflet because your child has been diagnosed as having had a febrile convulsion. It can be frightening and distressing to see your child having a seizure, particularly if it's their first one. However, they are usually harmless and almost all children make a complete recovery afterwards.

What is a Febrile Convulsion?

- A febrile convulsion is a seizure (also known as a 'fit') that is common in young children, usually between the ages of 6 months and 5 years old.
- The cause of febrile seizures is unknown, although they're linked to the start of a fever. (A fever is a high temperature of 38C (100.4F) or above).
- In most cases, the high temperature is caused by either a viral or bacterial infection.
- Many fevers are caused by a virus and your child will simply get better as their body's immune system responds and fights off the infection. Some fevers are caused by bacteria and we may have prescribed an antibiotic if we think your child has a bacterial infection. (See our antibiotic advice leaflet for further information on this)

What should I do at home?

- **Do not** try to reduce your child's fever by over or under dressing them, or by sponging them with water. Fever is a natural and healthy response to infection.
- It is okay to give your child Paracetamol or Ibuprofen if they have other symptoms, for example, if they have a sore throat that may be stopping them eating and drinking properly. Do **not use** to lower your child's temperature or to try to prevent a febrile convulsion because research has been shown that these do not reduce the risk of convulsions.
- Offer your child regular drinks (if you are breastfeeding then breast milk is best).
- Look for signs that your child may be dehydrated (dry mouth, no tears, sunken eyes, sunken fontanelle – the soft spot on a baby's head).
- Encourage your child to drink more fluids if they are dehydrated
- Keep your child away from school or nursery while they have a fever and notify them of your child's absence.

When should I worry?

You should **call 999** if;

- Your child develops a **non-blanching rash** (a rash that does not disappear with underneath a glass)
- Your child has **another convulsion that lasts for longer than 5 minutes**
- Your child's health gets worse

If you are worried about your child, you should see your GP. If you cannot see your GP, you could take them to your nearest Walk-in Centre or Urgent Treatment Centre or call 111.

You should seek further advice from a health care professional if;

- The fever lasts consistently for more than 5 days
- You are becoming more worried about your child
- You have concerns about looking after your child at home.

What first aid you should give for a febrile seizure?

- Stay calm and note the time the seizure starts
- Move any hard or sharp objects away from the child
- Do not move your child during the seizure or put anything in their mouth
- Wait for seizure to finish (**If not stopped in 5 minutes call 999**)
- Place child in recovery position and reassure once seizure has stopped
- Make your child as comfortable as possible. Contact a health professional (see above)
- If you are able to, try to record a video of the seizure on your mobile phone, this can be very helpful for the doctors and nurses when they see your child

