

Go to your doctor if your child:

- looks unwell.
- complains of a stiff neck or that the light hurts their eyes.
- has difficulty breathing.
- is refusing to drink anything.
- is vomiting a lot.

Any further questions?

Please phone:

- Our paediatric ambulatory care unit on 020 7288 3769 (Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 7.30am to 8:00pm) or
- Ifor Ward, our paediatric ward, (24 hours service) on 020 7288 5442 / 4102 or your GP.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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Fever fits (febrile convulsions)

A parent's guide



Important information

We know it's a very frightening experience for you as parents when your child has a fever fit (convulsion), but it is important to remember that your child will not be harmed. It will not cause brain damage, epilepsy or death.

This leaflet is to reassure you about fever fits, give you some facts and information on how to cope with them.

What is a fever fit?

It is an attack caused by a very high temperature or fever, in which the child becomes unconscious, and usually stiff, with jerking arms and legs. The fit is caused by a storm of activity in the brain.

A fever fit lasts about five minutes. Afterwards the child will be sleepy for between five to 30 minutes and then should return to normal.

What to do when your child has a fever fit

-Lie your child on their side, not on their back. Make a note of the time.

-Do not try and put anything in their mouth.

-Do not slap or shake your child.

-Check that they do not breathe in vomit.

-Stay with your child until the convulsion stops and they recover fully.

-Ask you GP to check your child the same day to see if there may be an infection that needs treating.

Treatment for future fits

Your child will not suffer pain or discomfort during a fit (convulsion), they are unconscious and totally unaware of what is happening.

The convulsion is much more upsetting for you than your child.

If the convulsion lasts for more than five minutes, you may have to give your child some medicine via their back passage. It is called rectal diazepam and is prescribed by your doctor. You should give your child one 5mg dose.

This should stop the convulsion within 10 minutes. If it does not, bring your child straight away to the emergency department or call for an ambulance.

Facts about fever fits

- Most fevers will not cause a fit.
- Fits are quite common, about one child in 30 will have one by the time they are five years old.
- It can happen again; three or four children out of 10 will have more than one.
- They do not lead to brain damage, death or epilepsy.
- They do not cause long-term problems.
- They are more common in children between six months and three years old.

What to do if your child gets a fever?

You should:

- Keep them cool.
- Give them plenty of fluids to drink.
- Give children's paracetamol (Calpol) to reduce their temperature.
- If you are worried phone your doctor.