



## When Should I Call the Doctor?

Parents may attempt to prepare and educate themselves about what to do when their baby has a fever or seems to be ill. If you, as a parent, are concerned with your child's health for any reason, do not hesitate to contact your child's pediatrician or a healthcare provider. A doctor should be on call 24/7 to support you and offer expertise regarding your situation. You will find that some symptoms are slight, such as a fever below 102°F or a cut on the knee. Other symptoms can indicate a more serious illness.

### When a Call to a Doctor Is Necessary



Refusing to eat or eating poorly for several feedings in a row.



Rash that appears infected or is unexplained, especially if there is an accompanying fever.



Hard to awaken or unusually sleepy.



Cold that interferes with breathing, nasal mucus lasting longer than 10–14 days, ear pain, or cough.



Extremely limp, crying more than usual, and hard to console.



Vomiting—liquid shoots out from the mouth, not the easy flow of spitting up—or unable to keep liquids down for 8 hours.



Navel or private parts are red, ooze, or bleed.



Diarrhea.



Sunken or swelling soft spot on head.



Fever as follows:



Constipation for a few days or if your baby is struggling or uncomfortable.

- If the child is under 3 months old, contact a doctor.
- If the child is 3–6 months old, contact a doctor if his or her temperature is 102°F (38.9°C) or higher.
- If fever lasts more than 3 days, contact a doctor.



Dehydration—fewer tears, fewer wet diapers, or a dry mouth.



Eye discharge—one or both eyes are red or leaking mucus.



### Safety Alert!

#### If you think you should call a doctor, do it!

Make sure you have a pen and paper ready to write down any instructions. If it is after office hours, you may be redirected to a 24-hour nurse line.

Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/infant-and-toddler-health/in-depth/healthy-baby/art-20047793>



## Additional Resources

Some additional resources that you may also find helpful include:



### Kids Health

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents>

This resource provides information for parents on child aches, pains, and illnesses that are typical throughout childhood.



### Zero to Three

<https://www.zerotothree.org/parenting>

This website offers information and tools to assist parents in strengthening their child's growth and development. A variety of topic areas are covered, including early development and wellbeing, parenting, early learning, and policy and advocacy.



### Baby Center

<https://www.babycenter.com/baby>

Provides information for parents on baby sleep habits, baby care, feeding, health, development, and safety. The following article specifically discusses signs of a fever and when to worry: [https://www.babycenter.com/health/illness-and-infection/fever-and-your-baby-or-child\\_84](https://www.babycenter.com/health/illness-and-infection/fever-and-your-baby-or-child_84)

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!