



## When Should I Call the Doctor?

As parents, we attempt to prepare and educate ourselves about what we should do when our baby has a fever or an illness. Most of the time, there should be no cause for concern. However, some signs and symptoms can relate to more serious illnesses.

### Signs and Symptoms that Warrant a Call to the Doctor



Refusing or eating poorly several feedings in a row.



Hard to awaken or unusually sleepy.



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



Navel or penis is red, oozes, or bleeds.



Sunken or swelling soft spot on head.



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



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



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



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



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



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



Diarrhea.



Fever:

- Under 3 months old – Contact the doctor.
- 3-6 months old – Contact the doctor if temperature is 102°F (38.9°C) or higher.
- If fever lasts more than 3 days – Contact the doctor.



### Safety Alert!

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

Make sure you have a pen and paper ready to jot down any instructions. If it is after hours, your doctor's office may redirect you 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!