

Notes on Fever

- What is a fever?

Fever is a rise of body temperature above the normal range. In most adults, an oral temperature above 37.8°C or a rectal or ear temperature above 38.0°C is considered a fever. Above 39.0°C and beyond, it is considered as high fever.

A child has a fever when his or her rectal temperature is 38.0°C or higher, or armpit temperature is 37.4°C or higher. Note that fever is rarely harmful, but a prolonged period of very high body temperature may be a sign of serious illness and is dangerous to small children. In children between the ages of six months and six years, fever can trigger convulsions. Particularly in the elderly, a fever of 42.4°C or higher, can permanently damage the brain.

- When do you see your doctor for fever?

You should always consult with your doctor in the following cases:

- You are still feverish after 3 days, despite home treatment.
- Your temperature is over 40°C.
- You are shivering and shaking involuntarily, or your teeth are chattering.
- You are hot but not sweating.
- You are getting sicker as time goes by.
- You have a severe headache that doesn't respond to painkillers.
- You feel drowsy and extremely tired.
- You have unusual symptoms such as hallucination, vomiting, neck stiffness, skin rash, rapid heart rate, chills or muscle spasms.