

Febrile Convulsion

This advice is intended for parents/carers taking their child home after consulting a doctor. Your doctor may recommend different treatments depending on your child's condition.



We know seeing a febrile convulsion may have been a very frightening experience for you. However, febrile convulsions are not as serious as they look. We have produced this leaflet so that you may have some facts about febrile convulsions.

- Febrile convulsions occur in about 1 in 30 children who have a fever, most commonly between 6 months – 3 years of age
- They often occur on the first day of a febrile illness. There appears to be no connection between the extent of the fever and convulsions, so they can occur even with mild fevers
- Any illness which causes a temperature may do it, usually a cold or other viral infection
- Simple febrile convulsions generally last less than 5 minutes, involve the whole body becoming stiff then jerking of all 4 limbs and the child may be sleepy afterwards but should return to their normal self within a couple of hours
- 1 in 3 children who have febrile convulsions may have further convulsions with febrile illnesses in the future. The risk of having another gets rapidly less after the age of 3 years
- Regular treatment for prevention of future seizures is usually not necessary. Febrile convulsions are not epilepsy. 99 out of 100 children with febrile convulsions never have convulsions after they reach school age, and never have fits without fever
- If your child has had a simple febrile convulsion, has a clear infection source that is causing their fever and you and the medical team are happy, they can be cared for at home




What to do if your child has another convulsion

- Place them on their side, on a soft surface with their face turned to one side. This will stop them swallowing any vomit and keep their airway protected
- Stay with your child and try to jot down what time their seizure starts and stops
- Do not put anything in your child's mouth, nor slap or shake them
- If the seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes seek immediate medical help – call 999 or go to the nearest Emergency Department.
- If the seizure lasts less than 5 minutes – phone your GP or NHS 111 for advice if you're worried
- The hospital may have given you medicine to insert into your child's mouth or bottom. If the convulsion carries on for more than 5 minutes (by the clock), give this medicine as stated on the label. This should stop the convulsion within 10 minutes. If it does not, bring them to hospital (dial 999 if necessary at this stage). In any event, let your doctor know what has happened.

How can I look after my child?

For practical advice for managing fever, see the Fever advice information sheet.

When should I get help?

 <p>RED</p>	<p>If your child has any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has another seizure in the current illness lasting more than 5 minutes and/or does not recover rapidly afterwards • Becomes extremely agitated, confused or very lethargic (difficult to wake) • Becomes pale, mottled and feels abnormally cold to touch • Is going blue around the lips • Develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (the 'Glass Test') 	<p>If your child has any of the following: Go to the nearest Hospital Emergency Department or phone 999</p>
 <p>AMBER</p>	<p>If your child has any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has another febrile convulsion (less than 5 minutes) in the current illness • Remains drowsy or lethargic more than an hour after their seizure • Has weakness of the arms or legs, visual difficulties (double vision) or difficulty speaking after the seizure has stopped • Is moving one side of the body more than the other, or is stiff on one side compared with the other • Seems dehydrated (sunken eyes, drowsy or no urine passed for 12 hours) • Is becoming drowsy (excessively sleepy) or irritable (unable to settle them with toys, TV, food or picking up) – especially if they remain drowsy or irritable despite their fever coming down • Continues to have a fever of 38.0°C or above for more than 5 days • Seems to be getting worse or if you are worried 	<p>You need to contact a doctor or nurse today. Please ring your GP surgery or call NHS 111 - dial 111</p>
 <p>GREEN</p>	<p>If none of the features in the red or amber boxes above are present.</p>	<p>Self-care Continue providing your child's care at home. If you are still concerned about your child, contact your GP or call NHS 111 – dial 111</p>