

## **FEVER**

### **What is a fever?**

Most often the cause of fever is a viral infection, but the disease may be caused by bacteria. The fever itself is not a disease, but a defence mechanism of the body, which helps the body to fight diseases.

Every elevation of body temperature is not yet fever. The body temperature can rise even if clothing is too warm, in strenuous physical work or playing sports. Temperature should be measured after at least 30 minutes of calm. Body temperature also fluctuates during the day – in the morning, it is lower as a rule and higher in the evening.

It is reasonable to measure body temperature from the armpit, and in this case, up to 37.3 degrees is considered normal body temperature. If you are not hypothermic and have measured a temperature of less than 36.6 degrees, it is also a normal condition – with the so-called low temperature you do not have to visit a doctor, it is one of your individual features.

### **Is fever dangerous?**

Generally, a fever is not dangerous. Although, the cause of fever can sometimes be a dangerous disease. If the fever makes you concerned, please contact your doctor or nurse.

### **You should always consult a doctor in the following cases:**

1. If a child of less than three months of age has a fever;
2. If the child is very slow or does not play during the day at all;
3. If the child is whining, tearful and cannot be calmed at all.
4. If the child is breathing heavily or vocally;
5. If the child refuses to drink;
6. If a person of any age has fever accompanied by frequent painful urination and when urine smells bad and is cloudy or bloody;
7. If the child has had a fever for more than 3 days and adults for more than 5 days;
8. If there are some other symptoms that make you worry.

### **How can you deal with a fever?**

In case of fever it's best to stay home and rest. Lying down on the bed is not necessary. During a fever the need for fluids increases; therefore, plenty of fluids should be consumed – tea, juice, water are suitable. Appetite is poor with a fever as a rule and eating does not have to be forced.

It is common that during a fever the hands and feet become cold and shivers start – then you must get dressed warmly or get under a blanket. However, if it's hot and hands-feet are hot, then too warm clothing or thick blankets should be avoided, because it prevents the lowering of the fever.

### **Should you lower a fever, and by how much?**

There is no specific body temperature value in which case it is necessary to reduce a fever or not. Giving fever medicine too easily may extend the progression of the disease and sometimes (although rarely) cause side effects. Fever medicine should be given taking into account the overall condition and feeling.

Pros of giving fever medicine:

- If there have been febrile seizures before;
- If sore throat, headache, earache, and/or muscle pain and overall bad feeling occur.

**It is not necessary to give fever medicine if the overall feeling is good despite the fever. Paracetamol and ibuprofen in all people and also aspirin in adults are suitable for lowering a fever. The exact dosage information can be found on the package leaflet. Between the two doses there must be a break for 6-8 hours as a rule and also be sure to follow the maximum daily dose.**

