

SAM

Sepsis Assessment & Management



What to look for if your child has a temperature and you are concerned

Notes

Red (high risk: take immediate action)

Many (but not all) children with these features are seriously unwell and need to be assessed straight away in hospital. Dial '999' for an ambulance if necessary.

Skin, lips and tongue

- Very pale or blue skin and sunken eyes
- Rash that does not fade when pressed firmly (use a clear glass)

Activity

- Not responding to carers
- Very difficult to wake up
- Weak, high-pitched or continuous cry in younger children
- Older children are confused or unusually irritable

Breathing

- Finding it much harder to breathe than normal
- Grunting breathing
- Very fast breathing: more than 60 breaths a minute
- Noticeable pauses in breathing

Circulation

- Very cold hands and feet

Temperature and body

- Under 3 months with raised temperature over 38°C
- The soft spot on an infant's head is bulging
- Stiff neck, especially when trying to look up and down
- The child has a seizure

Vomiting, diarrhoea and hydration

- Very thirsty and not able to keep fluids down
- Bloody or black 'coffee ground' vomit
- Not had a wee for 12 hours

Look out for the signs of sepsis

A raised temperature (fever) in children is common, but can be worrying. Almost all children will recover quickly and without problems. However, a very small proportion may have a serious infection with sepsis (bloodstream infection) that requires urgent treatment in hospital.

This information is designed to help you monitor your child's condition if they have a raised temperature, so you know when to ask for help and can describe the symptoms.

Just tick off any of those symptoms that you observe with a note of the date and time, and follow the advice at the top of the page.

For ease of use, the symptoms are split into:

- Amber, where medical advice should be asked for
- Red, which means you should get the child to hospital quickly – dial '999' if necessary and ask for an ambulance.

Again, we must stress that the great majority of children do not have sepsis. **But if you do have concerns and your child seems to be getting worse, even if their temperature falls, act swiftly just in case.**

Find out more

Detailed information can be found on the NICE website: www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/CG160

The UK Sepsis Trust also has a lot of helpful material at: www.sepsistrust.org

Email: info@sepsistrust.org

Phone: 0845 606 6255

Amber (intermediate risk: ask for advice)

Some (but not all) children with these symptoms are seriously unwell, so if you have any concerns at all, it is important for a trained health professional to assess them promptly. Contact your GP, NHS 111, your local walk-in centre or minor injuries unit.

	time/date	time/date	time/date	Notes	
Skin, lips and tongue					
Unusually pale	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Rash that fades when pressed firmly (use a clear glass)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Activity					
Not responding normally to family or carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Not smiling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Difficult to wake up or unusually sleepy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Not wanting to do very much	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Breathing					
Nostrils are flaring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Fast breathing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Unusually noisy or crackly breathing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Cough that sounds like a seal barking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Circulation					
Cold hands and feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Temperature and body					
Shivering or shaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Raised temperature for 5 days or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Swelling of a limb or joint	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Not using/putting weight on an arm, leg, hand or foot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Aged 3-6 months with temperature of 39°C or above	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Vomiting, diarrhoea and hydration					
Under 1 year of age – vomiting and/or diarrhoea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
More than 5 watery poos in the last 24 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Has vomited more than twice in last 24 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Not feeding or eating much	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Dry mouth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Only one wet nappy or wee in 12 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		