



Information for Patients and Carers

Febrile convulsion

A febrile convulsion is when a child has a seizure because they have a high temperature (fever). It usually happens to children between 6 months and 5 years old.

Any illness that causes a fever may lead to a febrile convulsion, including viral infections, ear infections and tonsillitis.

Even though it can look very scary, most febrile convulsions:

- Stop on their own
- Last less than 5 minutes
- Do not cause any long-term harm
- Are not epilepsy

If your doctor knows what is causing the fever and is happy that the child is well enough, the child can usually be looked after at home.

What are the signs and symptoms of febrile convulsions?

Your child may:

- Pass out and not respond (become unconscious)
- Become stiff
- Have shaking or jerking arms and legs
- Roll their eyes back
- Be very sleepy afterwards

Most children get better quickly and recover fully.

What should you do if your child is having a febrile convulsion?

DO:



- Stay calm
- Move objects away so your child does not hurt themselves
- Stay with your child
- Loosen any tight clothing, especially around the neck

Time the seizure

If the seizure lasts **longer** than 5 minutes call 999 or go to the nearest A&E straight away

If the seizure lasts **less** than 5 minutes – call NHS 111 or your GP for advice if you are worried



DO NOT:



- Put anything in their mouth
- Try to stop the movements or hold them down

After the seizure has stopped, gently turn your child on their side in the **recovery position** (scan the QR code to learn more about the recovery position)



When should you worry?

And where to go for help



RED

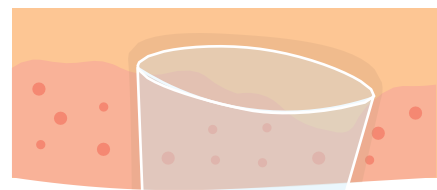
**You need
urgent
help.**

- The seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes
- Has another seizure in the current illness lasting more than 5 minutes and/or does not recover rapidly afterwards
- Becomes confused, agitated or very lethargic (e.g. difficult to wake)
- Becomes mottled, pale and feels cold to touch
- Is going blue around the lips
- Develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (the Glass Test) – scan the QR code below
- Is under 3-months old with a fever of 38°C or above
- Has weakness of the arms or legs, visual difficulties or difficulty speaking after the seizure has stopped

**Please attend
your local
Emergency
Department
or
call 999**

What is the glass test?

If a rash does not fade under a glass, it can be a sign of sepsis (sometimes called septicaemia or blood poisoning) caused by meningitis and you should call 999 straight away.



AMBER

- Has another febrile convulsion (less than 5 minutes) in the same illness
- Remains drowsy or lethargic for more than an hour after the seizure
- Is becoming drowsy or irritable, especially if they remain drowsy and irritable despite their fever settling down
- Seems dehydrated (sunken eyes, drowsy or no urine passed for 12 hours)
- Is 3-6 months with a temperature of 39°C or above
- 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

**Please
ring
your GP
or 111
for
advice**

GREEN

- If your child has none of the above features, you can continue to monitor them at home for amber or red symptoms.



To access more about this and to be able to read this in different languages, please visit our Paediatric Emergency Department webpage on <https://mft.nhs.uk/febrile-convulsion/>

