

Caring for your child when a fever causes a fit

Children's Emergency Department

Last reviewed: June 2024

Next review: June 2027

Information for Patients, Parents & Carers

Leaflet number: 1179 Version: 2

Introduction

Your child has been diagnosed as having had a fit that occurs with a temperature (febrile convulsion). This can be very frightening to see, but the fit is not as serious as it appears. Hospital staff feel it is safe for your child to go home and this leaflet will tell you what to look out for at home.

What is a febrile convulsion?

A febrile convulsion happens when a fever causes a fit. The fever is usually caused by a simple infection such as a cold, tonsillitis or an ear infection. Febrile convulsions normally happen in children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years.

There is often another family member who has had febrile convulsions when they were a child. Febrile convulsions are very common and the Emergency Department sees about 1 child a day during the winter months.

Around 1 in 3 children who have had a febrile convulsion will have another one but this does not mean they will develop problems with seizures (fits) later in life. Short febrile convulsions do not cause brain damage.

Paracetamol should only be used if your child is distressed and has a fever. Research has shown that repeated regular doses of paracetamol will not stop a febrile convulsion occurring.

What should I do if my child has another fit?

It is not usually possible to prevent febrile convulsions and so you need to be prepared if your child has another one.

Some children who have regular febrile convulsions may be prescribed a medicine to help stop the fit, but this is not normally needed.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk



If your child has another fit:

- make a note of the time. Most fits will stop by themselves, but if not it is important to know how long they last.
- do not put anything in your child's mouth, including your fingers.
- clear the surrounding area so they do not hurt themselves.
- do not try and stop the jerking movements.
- do not leave your child; stay close until the fit has finished.
- once the fit has finished, turn your child on their side to prevent choking if they sick.
- call 999 if the fit lasts more than 5 minutes or you are not sure what to do.

Do I need to come into hospital every time my child has a febrile convulsion?

If your child has regular convulsions you should discuss with a doctor whether they think it is safe for you not to come into hospital when it happens. If your child has a long fit or does not fully recover afterwards, you must bring them into hospital.

You should always see a doctor if you are not sure as to why your child has a fever which caused the fit.

Contact your GP or the NHS helpline on 111 for advice on where to attend if you are unsure.

Call an ambulance if a fit does not stop by itself within 5 minutes, or if you are concerned about your child's breathing.

Contact details

If you have any concerns you can contact the NHS helpline on 111 for advice.

Giving us your feedback

We would love to get some feedback on your visit today. Use your smart phone to scan this QR code for quick access to our online feedback survey form.

Or you can access the feedback form from our website:

<https://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/patients/thinking-of-choosing-us/patient-experience/>



اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો
ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk