

**Children under 5 illness leaflet** (please see your Nurse or GP for any further details)

This leaflet has been designed to help you understand what signs to look out for when your child is unwell, what you can do to help and when you need to seek medical help.

**IF YOU ARE AT ALL CONCERNED THEN PLEASE CONTACT A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL FOR HELP.**

There are 4 main areas that provide you with information regarding the physical wellbeing of your child. Please check ALL of these areas if you are concerned about your child. If you request medical attention you will be asked regarding these:

**1. Circulation/Hydration status**

The amount of fluid your child is taking is important. If they are passing urine this is a good sign and suggests that they have enough fluid inside them.

If your child is not passing urine or is vomiting or having diarrhea you should take this seriously as they may be at risk of dehydration. We tend to advise a fluid challenge if this is the case:

FLUID Challenge

Make up hydration solution – 1 litre water, 1 table spoon sugar, 1 tea spoon salt – you can also add some concentrate (squash) for flavour.

Every 5 minutes give your child 5 mls (1 teaspoon of the solution). If your child is able to keep fluids down this way then please persist until they are passing urine.

**IF THEY ARE NOT ABLE TO KEEP FLUIDS DOWN USING THIS METHOD AND NOT PASSING URINE THEN PLEASE SEE URGENT MEDICAL ATTENTION.**

**2. Temperature level**

We advise medication such as paracetamol if and when the child is in distress with the temperature, not solely because there is a temperature. Please check the dosages that come with the paracetamol bottle. Paracetamol can be given every 4-6 hours at a maximum of 4 times in 24 hours. If your child's fever persists then please consider alternating paracetamol and ibuprofen every 4 hours. If after 24 hours within this the temperature remains raised then please urgent medical attention.

PLEASE NOTE:

- **IF YOUR CHILD IS LESS THAN 3 MONTHS OLD AND THEIR TEMPERATURE IS 38C OR ABOVE PLEASE SEEK URGENT MEDICAL ATTENTION**

- IF YOUR CHILD IS BETWEEN 3 AND 6 MONTHS OLD AND THEIR TEMPERATURE IS 39C OR ABOVE PLEASE SEEK URGENT MEDICAL ATTENTION

### **3. Rashes**

Rashes can also be a common occurrence with viral illnesses but can occasionally be the sign of more sinister illnesses such as meningitis. The key thing to check if your child has a rash is that it fades with pressure. This is called a blanching rash.. You can check this in a number of ways.

- When you press the rash it should fade and then return when you let go
- Trial the tumbler test where you get a glass and press the rash. Looking through the glass at the rash while it is being pressed, allows you to see if it fades or not

A NON BLANCHING RASH WITH A FEVER REQUIRES URGENT MEDICAL ATTENTION AND COULD BE A SIGN OF MENINGITIS

### **4. Breathing**

With children, faster breathing can often be the first sign that they are unwell When:

The breaths taken per minute is 50 or more if age less than one year

The breaths taken per minute is 40 or more if age more than one year.

PLEASE SEE URGENT MEDICAL ATTENTION IF THE BREATHING RATE IS ABOVE THESE

Breathing at this rate can indicate that the child is putting in more effort than normal. If the other 3 key elements are stable and the breathing rate is fast steam inhalation can be simple but effective and help your child's chest:

STEAM INHALATION (Please use with caution as advised below to avoid unnecessary burns)

We normally advise you to carry your child into the bathroom and run the warm water tap allowing steam to fill the room. If you hold the child up with you this allows them exposure to the steam and after a 10 minute period this may help settle their breathing. This can also help blocked and stuffy noses.