



Fever Sickle Cell

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What is a fever?

- A fever is a temperature of 101^oF or higher. It's best to check your child's temperature before giving Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin). When giving fever medicine, check package for correct dose.
- Check your child's temperature with a thermometer when your child feels warm or is not feeling well.
- The best method for checking a fever is rectally (infants) and by mouth (older children).

What to do if your child has a fever?

Please take your child to his/her Pediatrician during the day or Emergency Department at night

Why is this important?

Patients with sickle cell disease are at higher risk for bacterial infection that can make them very sick or be life-threatening.

What to expect at the Pediatrician or Emergency Department?

- The doctor must make sure your child does not have a bacterial infection. Tell them that your child has sickle cell disease and a fever
- We expect the doctor will take blood from your child and give your child new antibiotics. If your child has any trouble breathing or has a cough, let the doctor know to order a chest X-ray.
- Antibiotics are medicines that treat bacterial infections that cause fever.
- If the doctor thinks you may have a bacterial infection, you may be admitted to the hospital until the doctors can prove your fever is not due to a bacteria.

How will the doctors know if my child has ACS?

- Once at the hospital, let the doctors know your child has sickle cell and trouble breathing, chest pain, shortness of breath, or wheezing. If your child has fever and the chest x-ray shows that blood is sickling in the lungs, the doctors will diagnosis him/her with ACS.
- Some children develop ACS while admitted for another sickle cell complication. If you feel that your child's breathing is worse while at the hospital, please tell the doctor immediately.

What to expect if admitted to the hospital?

- The blood that the doctors collect will help determine if your child has bacteria causing fever. It can take up to 48 hours in the hospital to know if your child has bacteria.
- Your child should get antibiotics to treat possible bacteria.
- If your child is doing well, has no cough or difficulty breathing, you may be able to go home on the 2nd or 3rd day of the hospitalization.

What to expect after discharge from a hospital?

- Some viruses may cause fever for 7-10 days but antibiotics do not treat viruses.
- Some viruses or fevers can cause new sickle cell complications. If your child develops trouble breathing, gets very tired, or has new symptoms please take your child back to the doctor.
- If your child gets better but develops a new fever, please take them back to the doctor.

How can you help prevent infection.

- Giving your child Penicillin twice a day can greatly reduce the chance of bacterial infection.
- Making sure your child gets all recommended vaccines to prevent infections.
- Good handwashing is very helpful to stop your child from getting sick.