

How to Determine When it's Time to Call the Pediatrician

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As a pediatrician, I get calls from worried moms at all times of the day and night. According to a recent survey conducted on behalf of the makers of **TYLENOL®**, six out of ten (61%) moms with young children wish they knew more about how children catch colds and the flu.¹ It's normal to worry about your child! But it's important to know when it's time to call the doctor, and when the care you have available at home is enough to get your child back on the road to health. This information should help.

Fever

When to Call the Doctor About a Fever: Fevers, especially in babies, are common and often go hand in hand with a cold or the flu. The first step is a fever reducer like Infants' **TYLENOL®** – which pediatricians have recommended and moms have relied on for more than 20 years. However, there are certain instances, depending on your little one's age, when a doctor's visit is needed, including:

- **Babies Less Than 3 Months Old:** If a newborn, less than 3 months of age, has a rectal temperature of 100.4° or higher, call your pediatrician right away or go to the Emergency Room. Newborns can become very sick very quickly and need to be evaluated. For babies this young, speak to your doctor before giving a fever-reducing medication.
- **Babies Between 3 and 6 Months Old:** If your infant is 3 to 6 months old with a temperature above 102°, or appears very sick, is lethargic, won't drink fluids, or has any fever that lasts more than 3 days, call your pediatrician.
- **Children of Any Age:** Regardless of age, if your little one refuses or is unable to drink fluids, experiences a seizure, a rash, a stiff neck, confusion, trouble breathing, continuous crying, persistent vomiting or diarrhea, is difficult to wake up, or just appears to be abnormally sick, call your doctor immediately.

Coughs

Know the Sounds of Coughing: Nearly three-fourths (72%) of moms say they are extremely or very concerned when their child has a wet, phlegmy cough, according to a survey from the makers of **TYLENOL®**.¹ But there are a few specific signs that can help moms differentiate between a normal cough that can easily be treated at home, and one that needs a pediatrician's attention. If your child has a high fever or any sign of difficulty breathing such as wheezing or chest pain, call your pediatrician.

Runny Nose

Grab the Tissues: A runny nose is common among children, and while it can be messy, it's rarely a reason for worry. It's usually caused by a common cold and will get better on its own. To help your child feel better, try soft tissues, a dab of aloe or petroleum jelly to prevent chapping, a cool mist humidifier, and lots of TLC and some time.

Diarrhea and Vomiting

- **Fluids, Fluids, Fluids:** Fluids are important to prevent and treat dehydration. Try small amounts at first and increase as tolerated. Call your pediatrician if your child can't keep down even small amounts of fluids or is showing any signs of dehydration such as fewer wet diapers, lack of energy, no tears or dry lips and tongue.
- **Prevent Diaper Rash:** If your infant or toddler has diarrhea, apply a diaper ointment to prevent and treat any irritation or diaper rash that might develop.
- **Watch That Tummy:** It's always good to keep in mind brands like Infants' **TYLENOL®** that are gentle on the tummy. But if your child can't keep down even a small amount of fluid, looks lethargic, shows any sign of dehydration, or just appears to be abnormally sick, it's time to explore treatment options with your doctor.

¹ Online survey conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of the makers of **TYLENOL®** between May 22 and June 3, 2013 among 300 U.S. moms, age 18+, with children who are 0-3 years old, can smile at things they find amusing, and have recovered from an illness such as a cold or the flu.

