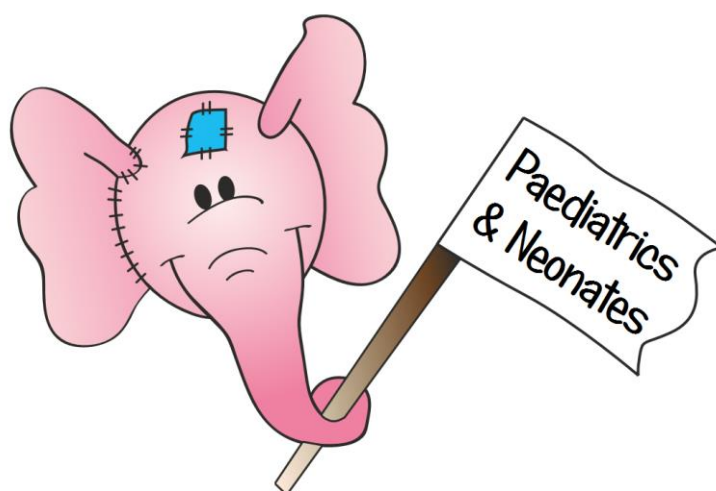


Febrile convulsions

Children's Ward

Parent/Carer Information Leaflet



Introduction

Your child has had a febrile convulsion, also known as a fit. We know it is a very frightening and distressing experience seeing your child having a fit, which is why we have put together this leaflet to explain the facts about febrile convulsions.

What is a febrile convulsion?

A febrile convulsion is a type of fit that can happen if your child's temperature gets too high too quickly. You may hear them referred to as a fit, seizure or convulsions which all mean the same thing.

Febrile convulsions usually happen in children aged between six months and six years. They are a relatively common childhood condition and they are usually the result of an infection.

Although this may be distressing to witness and may be frightening, they are harmless and pose no threat to a child's health unless the fit goes on for a long time.

They are not the same as epileptic seizures, and do not mean that your child is epileptic. Epileptic seizures are not associated with a temperature, unlike febrile seizures. There is a slight increased risk that a child who has had febrile seizures will get epilepsy, but the risk is small.

What happens during a febrile seizure?

The cells in the brain, known as neurons, communicate with each other using electrical impulses. A seizure occurs when the electrical impulses become disrupted. This can cause the brain and the body to behave abnormally.

A seizure is an attack in which your child becomes unconscious, usually goes stiff and their arms and legs jerk. Some children may even wet themselves during the fit. Most seizures stop without any treatment. They can last up to 15 minutes.

Some children may have more complex seizures, lasting more than 15 minutes and can have further seizures within the 24 hour period after the first one. In some cases, children need to have medication to stop the seizure. This often makes children sleepy and will mean that your child needs to be monitored while they are in hospital.

As your child has had one febrile fit, there is a chance they may have more in the future.

What should I do if my child has a high temperature?

- Give your child medicine, if they can swallow, such as a paracetamol or an ibuprofen-based product, if they can take it (always read the label; do not exceed the recommended dose). This will help reduce their temperature.
- Take off some of your child's clothing.
- Contact your GP if your child has a high temperature to try and find out what is causing it.

Do not cool your child so much that they start to shiver. This means that they are too cold.

What should I do if my child has another seizure?

- Put your child on their side in the recovery position.
- Place a towel under their head.
- Time the seizure.
- Do not try to put anything in your child's mouth or shake them.
- Wait five minutes to see if the seizure stops. If it lasts longer, or you notice any change in your child's colour, dial 999 for an ambulance.

If your child's seizure lasts longer than five minutes, your child may need to be given medication to stop the fit.

Will my child need to take regular medication?

If your child has regular seizures that last longer than five minutes, the consultant may prescribe medication to give your child at the start of an infection.

Please note that your child does not need any medication for epilepsy, as a febrile seizure is not an epileptic seizure.

While your child has a temperature and an underlying infection, it is advisable to give regular them paracetamol or ibuprofen-based products to keep their temperature down, if they can take them (always read the label; do not exceed the recommended dose).

If your child is given antibiotics, please complete the full course to try and make sure the infection does not come back.

Can I find out more?

You can find out more from the following weblink:

NHS Choices

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/febrile-convulsions/Pages/Introduction.aspx#whattodo>

If you have any questions or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Children's ward on 01384 244271

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dgft.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/paediatrics-and-neonatology/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email dgft.patient.information@nhs.net

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

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Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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