

What are febrile convulsions?

- They are brief convulsions or fits that happen because your child is running a temperature.
- Febrile convulsions are quite common in babies and young children, 3 children in every 100 have at least one.
- It usually happens between the ages of 6 months and 6 years
- Most children grow out of them before they start school.
- They are frightening for parents and children but it's over quickly and the child recovers completely.
- Growing children have sensitive brains, and the high temperature disturbs brain activity. This is what causes the symptoms.
- Febrile convulsions are not the same as epilepsy. Children with epilepsy have convulsions that are not associated with high temperature.

It does not usually cause any problems with children's learning or development.

Call 999 for an ambulance if:

1. If the child looks unwell/septic.
2. It is the child's first convulsion.
3. The child has several convulsions in a short space of time, even if they each last less than 5 minutes.
4. If your child has more than one seizure in a 24-hour period
5. If it's a focal seizure (Sometimes they may twitch or shake more on one side of their body, or it may last longer than 5 minutes, if they are experiencing this then they may be experiencing a complex febrile convulsion)

Further information

- NHS 111
- From Patient UK, online at www.patientuk.co.uk
- Always see your GP after a child has a febrile seizure, and bring any unanswered questions.

Eastern Paediatric Epilepsy Network

Febrile convulsions

Information and advice for parents and carers



What is it?
What do I need to know?

Will my child have another febrile convulsion?

- Yes, they may have another but most children have just one episode of febrile convulsion.
- 1 in 3 chance of another febrile convulsions
- Overall risk for epilepsy is slightly increased than general population

What can I do to prevent it?

- No method is totally effective.
- If your child has a high temperature, measures to bring it down may be helpful:
 - Keep your child well hydrated
 - Give regular paracetamol (for example, Calpol) or ibuprofen.
 - If sweating, remove some of the clothing.
 - Make sure the room is not too hot.
 - Note: tepid sponging is not recommended
 - **Paracetamol** can be given every 4-6 hours but do not give more than four doses in 24 hours.
 - **Ibuprofen** can be given every 6-8 hours. Do not give more than 3 doses in 24 hours.

What should I do if this happens?

Stay calm. Look at your watch to see when it starts.

Move any hard or sharp objects away from the child.

Remember: do not put anything in the mouth, and do not move a child who is having a convulsion.

Stops within 5 minutes

Wait for the convulsion to finish
It's important to stay calm.

Has not stopped within 5 minutes

- Put your child in the recovery position and reassure.
- Make your child as comfortable as possible, including bringing temperature down – see left.
- Once stopped, child may be sleepy, confused and upset- reassure and allow them to sleep
- See your GP.

If another convulsion starts or the Child doesn't improve.

Call an ambulance
999

