

How to recognise if your child is seriously ill

GREEN (low risk: self-care advice)

If your child does not have any AMBER or RED symptoms but you would like some further information about how to care for them at home, please visit the healthier together website: wyhealthiertogether.nhs.uk.

Advice is also available from your local pharmacist. However, if you feel that your child may be seriously ill, or if something that concerns you is not on these lists, contact your GP or 111 for advice.

AMBER (medium risk: ask for advice)

Temperature

- Raised temperature (more than 37.5 degrees celsius) for five days or more
- Shivering or shaking

Breathing

- Nostrils flaring (change size with each breath)
- Breathing faster than normal
- Breathing that's unusually noisy or sounds 'crackly'
- Cough that sounds like a seal barking

Skin, lips and tongue

- Unusually pale skin
- Dry mouth, lips and/or tongue
- Rash that fades when pressed firmly (use a clear glass)

Eating and drinking

- Baby under one year who is not feeding (or taking less than half of their usual amount of milk)
- Feeding or eating much less than normal
- Has vomited (been sick) more than twice in the last 24 hours
- Under one year old with vomiting and/or diarrhoea

Toilet/nappies

- Under one year old with more than five watery poos (diarrhoea) in the last 24 hours
- Only one wee or wet nappy in eight hours

Activity and body

- Less interested than usual in playing or 'not quite right'
- Difficult to wake up or unusually sleepy
- Swelling of a limb or joint
- Not using/putting weight on an arm, leg, hand or foot

Contact GP practice, walk-in centre, or 111.

RED (high risk: take action)

Temperature

- Temperature over 38 degrees celsius in babies under three months
- Temperature over 39 degrees celsius in babies aged three to six months
- Any high temperature in a child who cannot be encouraged to show interest in anything
- Low temperature (below 36 degrees celsius, check three times in a 10 minute period)

Breathing

- Finding it much harder to breathe than normal – looks like they are working hard
- Making 'grunting' noises with every breath (in newborns this may sound like a lamb bleating)
- Very fast breathing (more than one breath each second in babies under one year)

- Can't say more than a few words at once (for older children who normally talk)
- Breathing that obviously 'pauses'

Skin, lips and tongue

- Skin is blue, mottled (purplish, red) or very pale
- Lips or tongue are bluish
- Eyes look 'sunken'
- Hands and feet are unusually cold to touch
- Rash that does not fade when pressed firmly (use a clear glass)

Eating and drinking

- Baby under one month old with no interest in feeding
- Not drinking for more than eight hours (when awake)
- Extremely thirsty or unable to keep fluids down

- Persistently vomiting for more than 24 hours
- Bloody, black or brown vomit/sick

Toilet/nappies

- Not had a wee or wet nappy for 12 hours

Activity and body

- Soft spot on a baby's head is bulging
- Child is floppy
- Not responding to family or carers or very irritable
- Weak, 'high pitched' or continuous crying in a younger child
- Hard to wake up, won't stay awake or doesn't seem to recognise you
- Stiff neck, especially when trying to look up and down
- Older children who are confused
- The child has a seizure (a fit)

Action: phone 999 or take them to an Emergency Department (A&E):

- **Pinderfields Emergency Department (Wakefield) – open 24/7. If your child needs admitting, this will be to the children's ward at Pinderfields which has specialist children's care 24/7.**
- **Dewsbury Emergency Department – open 24/7. There is dedicated children's care on-site 10am to 10pm.**
- **If another Emergency Department which sees children is closer to your home, you should attend this hospital.**