

FEVER

Treatment Indication: Fever is a natural body response primarily to infection or heat emergencies, but should last a relatively short period of time. Rapid temperature elevation in children may cause febrile seizures.

It is important to distinguish fever from an infection versus hyperthermia from environmental exposure, or even malignant hyperthermia from certain medications or illicit drugs. In fever caused by infection, the hypothalamus is telling the body to produce heat, a defense mechanism used to defeat the infectious agent. Acetaminophen resets the body's thermostat, thus lowering the fever. In environmental or malignant hyperthermia, or in extreme fever associated with infection (>105 degrees Fahrenheit), proceed with aggressive cooling measures.

ALL EMS PROVIDERS

- Establish Primary Management
- If temperature > 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit (38.6 Celcius) or if patient feels extremely hot, responders may apply cool moist towels to the body.
- If conscious and alert, patient may drink fluids.

BLS PROVIDERS

- ALS intercept required only if decreased LOC or history of seizure.
- For pediatric patients with fevers due to a suspected infectious cause, acetaminophen (Tylenol and other commercial preparations) in liquid form may be administered per the label's instructions, especially for transport times over 20 minutes. Patient must be alert, have a gag reflex and not be allergic to acetaminophen.
 - The New Mexico State Scope of Practice states that the dose is 10mg/kg for acetaminophen. However, this is a difficult drug calculation to complete, and may lead to an overdose of the adult patient. Administer the acetaminophen per the instructions on the bottle. If the bottle is a children's preparation, it still may be used for adults, but do not exceed a dose of 750 mg for the adult.

ILS PROVIDERS

- If signs of dehydration or shock potential are present: enroute, initiate IV of NS, titrate to maintain LOC, HR and organ end perfusion.
- If febrile seizures occur, follow seizure protocol and gently cool patient by whatever reasonable means possible, but do not use cold IV fluid.

ALS PROVIDERS

- Treat recurrent seizures per the seizure guideline.