

### Mayo Clinic Medical Edge

#### **N36 When to Take Your Child to the E.D.**

Intro: Runny nose, sore throat, cough and a fever. Those symptoms are typical of cold and flu season. Most of the time kids who catch a virus get better on their own with the help of some TLC. But how do parents know when it's time to take them to the doctor? Here's advice from a pediatric emergency physician at Mayo Clinic.

#### **Video**

#### **Audio**

<b>TRT 2:02</b> <b>Voice of Vivien Williams</b>	Little Sarah and her sister Maggie are in the E.D. because of persistent cold and flu symptoms.
	Runny nose, sore throat and a fever.
<b>Jim Homme, M.D.</b>	"Hi, Sarah, I'm Dr. Homme."
<b>Jim Homme, M.D.</b> <b>Mayo Clinic Emergency Medicine</b>	"Fevers are usually designated as a temperature greater than 100.4
<b>Voice of Vivien Williams</b>	Dr. Jim Homme sees many kids come into the E.D. because of fever. But he says, these days, with most kids having been vaccinated against many common and dangerous illnesses, the height of the fever doesn't always correspond to the severity of illness.
<b>Jim Homme, M.D.</b> <b>Mayo Clinic</b>	"For the majority of children, parents should never use the fever as the sole indication to bring them to the doctor."
<b>Voice of Vivien Williams</b>	For example, he says he's more concerned about a listless child with a low temp than a more normal-acting one with a higher temp.
<b>Jim Homme, M.D.</b> <b>Mayo Clinic</b>	"So its really important for a parent to look at their child and assess how they act and interact compared to what they normally act like, and make decisions based on that and not so much based on the fever."
<b>Voice of Vivien Williams</b>	Look for other symptoms such as difficulty breathing, very poor fluid intake,

	severe pain, vomiting or if your child is listless or not responsive. And it's important to be extra vigilant with newborns.
<b>Jim Homme, M.D. Mayo Clinic</b>	"Any temperature over 100.4 in the infant less than 2 months, sometimes less than three months if they haven't had their vaccines yet, is going to be a trigger for you to bring them in."
<b>Voice of Vivien Williams</b>	Dr. Homme says you should also bring in your child if symptoms suddenly get worse. Or if a fever goes away and then comes back, as that could be a sign of a secondary infection such as pneumonia, which may require treatment with antibiotics.
<b>Voice of Vivien Williams</b>	Most kids do get better on their own. So they key is to help relieve symptoms.
<b>Jim Homme, M.D. Mayo Clinic</b>	"You can treat your child with the appropriate dose of acetaminophen or ibuprofen."
<b>Voice of Vivien Williams</b>	If your child is not up to date on vaccinations or has health problems such as being immune compromised, do see a doctor if fever is present. For Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Vivien Williams.

Anchor tag:

Dr. Homme reminds us that cold viruses are spread through contact, so hand washing and covering your mouth when you cough are key. He also says kids with colds or flu need plenty of fluids and lots of rest.

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