

# Temperature-Taking Under Armpit Procedure

## Purpose

This document explains how to take a child's temperature under the armpit.

## Guidance

The under armpit method (axillary method) may be used on infants or children up to the age of five years. Take the temperature when the child is quiet if possible. Body temperature varies depending on the amount of activity, emotional stress, type of clothing worn and temperature reading.

## Procedure

### Use an oral digital thermometer

1. Insert the thermometer into a thermometer protective cover. Press the button on thermometer to turn it on.
2. Place the thermometer in the child's unclothed armpit. Fold the child's arm across their chest and hold the thermometer in place. Remove and read the temperature when thermometer beeps. Press the button on thermometer to turn it off and clean the thermometer using an alcohol pad.
3. Notify the parent and advise them to call the doctor if:
  - The child has a fever of 99 degrees F and one of the following symptoms:
    - irritability (crying or fussy)
    - poor feeding
    - floppy or listless
    - breathing is difficult
    - coughing
    - does not look well
  - The temperature is less than 97 degrees F (after repeating the process once).
  - The child feels hot to the touch and you are unable to get a thermometer reading.
  - Fever is present with abnormal movements.

### Care of the thermometer

Before and after each use, remove thermometer cover and wipe thermometer with an alcohol pad. Store it in a safe place out of the reach of children.