

COMMON CHILDHOOD ILLNESSES

Bruises

These can be treated with a cold compress - wet a cloth with cold water and apply pressure to the area.

Contact the surgery if your child continues to be able to use that part of the body after 24 hours has passed.

Accidents/head injury

Watch your child for 24 hours. Ask for help immediately if the child is unconscious, even if only for a short time, or if bleeding from the ear.

Contact the surgery if your child is confused or complains of seeing double, if they become clumsy or if they vomit.

Poisoning

Contact the surgery immediately if you believe your child has eaten or drunk anything poisonous.

High temperature

This can sometimes be linked with an infection or as part of a childhood illness such as chickenpox. Keep the room cool, cool down their skin by wetting with a cloth dampened with tepid water. Give them cold drinks and Paracetamol such as Calpol. If your child is weak with a temperature, it is rarely anything serious.

Contact the surgery if your child becomes unwell, breathless, unresponsive, drowsy. It is safe to bring your child to the surgery with a high temperature.

Cough, cold, sore throat, stuffy nose

These are usually caused by the cold virus. The child should be reassured, comforted and propped up on pillows to help with breathing. Antibiotics are not appropriate for this type of infection.

Contact the surgery if you suspect they might have inhaled something, if your child has difficulty breathing or if wheezing, if they are having problems breathing when feeding (baby) or if the cough lasts for more than three weeks or if your child is really unwell and you have concerns.

Rash

These can be caused by measles, German measles, chickenpox etc., or sometimes an allergy. Use calamine lotion for irritation.

Contact the surgery (or the out of hours service) if the rash fails to whiten on pressure (e.g. when applying a glass tumbler to it). If your child is unwell, vomiting or extremely drowsy.

Earache

This can be caused by an infection, excessive wax or by catarrh with a cold. Earache can be treated with junior Paracetamol or Disprol.

Contact the surgery (or the out of hours service) if the pain is not settling. In young children, pulling at their ears is not usually a sign of an ear infection.

Sickness, vomiting or tummy ache

These can be caused by constipation, by eating or drinking too much or by an infection of some kind. Offer frequent small sips of plain drinks - not milk - for 24 hours or for around 4 hours after the last vomit. Give junior Paracetamol or Disprol. If a baby, continue to breast feed frequently to keep up their fluid intake. If bottle feeding, stop formula milk and replace with water.

Contact the surgery if your child's tummy is very tender when pressed or if the vomiting lasts for more than 3 days. If the child becomes floppy, difficult to rouse, if there is blood in the vomit or stool, if there is tenderness in the scrotum or groin.