

Subject: Treatment – All Providers
Fever / Pyrexia

I. Purpose:

To provide prehospital assessment and treatment guidelines for patients with fever (pyrexia) in adult and pediatric patients, including the use of oral and intravenous acetaminophen (Tylenol)(Paramedic Only)

II. Definition

Fever (Pyrexia) is defined as body temperature $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ (100.4°F).

Fever is typically a physiological response to infection or inflammation but may also occur with environmental exposure, medications, or metabolic disorders.

III. Clinical Considerations

Assess for:

- A. Signs of infection
- B. Altered mental status
- C. Dehydration
- D. Sepsis indicators (qSOFA assessment)
- E. Recent illness or exposure
- F. Immunocompromised status
- G. Pediatric age < 3 months with fever

IV. Fever Severity Classification

- A. $100.4\text{--}102^{\circ}\text{F}$ ($38\text{--}38.9^{\circ}\text{C}$) – Mild Fever
- B. $102\text{--}104^{\circ}\text{F}$ ($39\text{--}40^{\circ}\text{C}$) – Moderate Fever
- C. $>104^{\circ}\text{F}$ ($>40^{\circ}\text{C}$) – Severe Fever / Hyperpyrexia

V. BLS Treatment:

- A. Scene safety
- B. Primary assessment (ABCs)
- C. Oxygen if indicated (maintain $\text{SpO}_2 \geq 94\%$)
- D. Position of comfort
- E. Obtain vital signs including temperature
- F. Assess hydration status
- G. Remove excessive clothing if febrile
- H. Avoid aggressive cooling unless heat illness is suspected

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VI. ALS Treatment:

- A. Obtain a temperature if not already done.
- B. Evaluate for sepsis criteria, dehydration, altered mental status, meningitis symptoms, and other infection sources.
- C. If patients can tolerate oral medications, administer oral acetaminophen
- D. Cardiac Monitor and assess for new onset tachyarrhythmias.

Establish IV/IO access if:

- A. Fever $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ or
- B. Unable to tolerate oral medication or
- C. Suspected infection with fever or
- D. Administer IV acetaminophen per policy

VII. Special Considerations

- A. Infants < 3 months with fever may have serious infection and require rapid transport.
- B. Elderly patients may present with infection without fever and may show altered mental status or weakness.
- C. Febrile seizures should be treated according to seizure protocol before fever treatment.

VIII. Document:

- A. Temperature measurement
- B. Medication dose and route
- C. Patient weight (pediatrics)
- D. Response to medication
- E. Suspected infection source, including assessment for qSOFA findings, the presence of Brudzinski's or Kernig's signs.