

Parent Temperature Taking Process



Doncaster and Bassetlaw
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Introduction

The purpose behind this leaflet is to introduce parents to the concept of temperature taking, so that they can participate in this crucial aspect of their baby's care. It is the nurse's responsibility to promote this process and to determine when the baby is clinically stable enough for it to begin.

The Temperature Taking Process

It is the responsibility of the nurse to:

- Assess the clinical condition of a baby, prior to each axilla temperature procedure
- Demonstrate the procedure to the baby's parents
- Explain that a nurse will be present throughout the procedure, offering support and guidance where needed
- Be familiar with the necessary equipment and display knowledge of the procedure
- Communicate effectively with the parent.

It is the responsibility of the parents to:

- Wash hands before and after completing the procedure
- Ensure a thermometer probe cover has been appropriately attached
- Ensure that the axilla thermometer probe (along with the cover) has been securely placed under the armpit and that it is in the correct position prior to the reading



- Be aware of acceptable axilla temperature parameters:
36.6 °C to 37.2 °C
- Monitor the baby throughout. If at any point the baby becomes, unwell the parent must discontinue taking their temperature
- Show the temperature reading to the nurse, who will record the result.

Advice for Parents

Q: Is the axilla temperature 36.5 °C or less?

A: If so, dress the baby appropriately: e.g. layer clothes in the cot, vest, baby grow, cardigan hat and blankets.

Q: Does the nursery feel cool?

A: Recheck the temperature 1 hour after making any changes to clothing, adding blankets or placing the baby on a sheepskin under the bottom sheet. A heated mattress may also be needed and the nurse should increase the incubator temperature.

Q: Is the axilla temperature 37.2°C or higher?

A: Firstly, consider removing one blanket at a time. After an hour has passed, recheck the temperature and make any necessary changes to the bedding, or remove clothing. In addition to this, you should consider the environmental room temperature and time of year (summer).

Q: Is the baby on a heated mattress/phototherapy/nursed in an incubator?

A: Always inform the nurse first before changing anything.

Record of practice for taking your baby's axilla temperature

Activity	Discussed	Demonstrated	1	2	3	4	5	Competent
Date								
Hand Hygiene								
Preparing the thermometer/ probe cover								
Correct position applied								

- Parent to be observed a minimum of 5 times
- Nurse to sign when observing parent on the chart
- Parent to sign at the end of the chart once they feel confident and competent
- Please keep in baby's medical notes.

Contact for Doncaster and Bassetlaw Neonatal Unit: 01302 642696.

Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

The team are available to help with any concerns, complaints or questions you may have about your experience at the Trust. Their office is in the Main Foyer (Gate 4) of Doncaster Royal Infirmary. Contact can be made either in person, by telephone or email.

The contact details are:

Telephone: 01302 642764 or 0800 028 8059

Email: dbth.pals.dbh@nhs.net