



NMDOH Standing Order for Over-the-Counter Medication Administration for 2022-2023 School Year: Fever

Although the safety profile of non-prescription Over the Counter (OTC) medications is generally good, they are medications to be used with caution, in limited amounts, and only when other options or interventions are not practical. NMDOH recommends that OTC's not be given more than three consecutive school days or more than three times a month without physician consultation.

In New Mexico, a healthcare medical order/provider authorization is required before a nurse may administer any medication, including OTC medications. Additionally, in the educational setting, parental/guardian written consent is required. The medical authorization is usually valid for the full school year. It is ideal to obtain the healthcare provider order at the beginning of the school year but may be provided or amended at any time. Nurses are to contact the student's healthcare provider as needed for orders (preferably faxed).

If barriers exist in obtaining a medical order/authorization from the student's healthcare provider, schools and school districts may choose to implement an OTC medication policy that includes the use of the NM DOH OTC standing orders. Schools should have an approved school policy for the use of the DOH standing order prior to implementation. Schools should follow internal procedure to acquire approval and update policy

It is recommended that OTC medications be student specific and provided to the school in an unopened container by the parent/guardian. If a school or district chooses to purchase stock OTC medications, the NMDOH recommends the use of unit dose (i.e., individually packaged) medications.

For students who cannot tolerate swallowing pills/tablets, and for ease of administration of small dosages, liquid medication is a consideration. It is best for parents/guardians to purchase or provide patient-specific liquid medications in small amounts and stored in the Health Office at the manufacturer's recommended temperature.

NMDOH Standing Order for Fever

Purpose: To provide relief for minor fever equal to or greater than 102.0°F for students if parent/guardian pick up is delayed.

Policy: Licensed school nurses (RN), with a school board-approved policy permitting the use of a NMDOH OTC standing order, may manage and treat students four years of age or older with temperature equal to or greater than 102.0°F according to this standing order.

Fever is not life-threatening unless it is extreme and persistently high. Low-grade fever may help fight infection.

Procedure:

Review the NM School Health Manual section on fever in Chapter 8.

Perform and document a complete assessment of the student to include:

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- Presenting complaint
- Signs/symptoms (character, onset, location, duration, severity, pattern, and associated factors)
- Vital signs (temperature, pulse, and respiration)
- Associated symptoms, such as headache, body aches, shivering, chills, or sweats is to be assessed
- Fluid intake
- Stressful situations
- Recent medication intake, especially antipyretics such as acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol) or ibuprofen, as well as antibiotics/antivirals

Contact parent/guarding if student recall about prior medication use is unreliable.

A normal body temperature may fluctuate regularly. A fever in a student ≥ 5 years of age is defined as a temperature 100.5°F . A **fever of concern** is a temperature of 103.1°F or greater.

Assess for the possible causes of the fever, including history of conditions that may cause fever (e.g., infections – respiratory, GI, urinary, skin, brain, blood; medications, illicit drugs, heat exposure, allergies, exercise, or inflammatory diseases).

Red Flags that indicate need for urgent medical evaluation include:

- Student < 5 years of age
- Temperature $> 103.1^{\circ}\text{F}$
- If $> 100.0^{\circ}\text{F}$ and weak immune system (diabetes, HIV, chemotherapy, organ transplant)
- Inability to control the fever
- Hypotension/low blood pressure
- Dehydration (due to vomiting, diarrhea, or decreased intake)
- Seizure
- Change in consciousness/alertness, slurred speech, irritability
- Shallow, rapid, or difficult breathing
- Drowsiness, nausea/vomiting
- Headache that does not improve, stiff neck
- Rash (purple or blood-colored)
- A student with complex medical problems
- A student appears “ill” or unstable

Young age, other health conditions, and/or developmental disabilities may affect ability to identify Red Flags and should be considered.

If a Red Flag is identified, notify the parent/guardian of concerns and need for urgent medical evaluation

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and activate EMS if student appears unstable.

If no Red Flags identified, then:

For fever greater than or equal to 100.5 °F contact parent to pick up student from school. Use non-pharmacologic comfort measures as first-line measures. This can include:

- Rest
- Loosen clothing
- Apply cold cloth or compresses
- Use fan to cool student
- Drinking cool fluids
- Light clothing or covers
- Reassurance

Students with fever should always be sent home - there is no returning to class with fever.

Covid 19 should be suspected in students with fever. Please see PED toolkit for guidance and requirements for management of suspected Covid 19 cases. Follow PED toolkit procedure for returning to school after illness.

If parent will be delayed in picking up student from school and student temperature is equal to or greater than 102.0 °F, an OTC may be indicated.

Confirm Parent or guardian permission for the specific OTC medication that is to be administered. Either written permission, or telephone permission received by the RN, must be documented.

No OTC medications are to be given without assessment by a school nurse (RN); if an LPN does the initial assessment, a supervising RN must review the assessment before the medication is administered.

IF, in the school nurse's professional opinion, an OTC medication is indicated in the treatment of a student at school AND the medication meets ALL the following:

- Greater than or equal to four years of age
- Approved for use by the FDA for the indicated age group
- Is approved by the student's parent or guardian
- Is familiar to the nurse and allowed under school district policy
- Is available in the original package that specifies dosage and contraindication information
- Is safe and indicated for the student's condition
- The student has no known allergies to the OTC medication
- The student has taken the OTC medication previously

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The school nurse may administer either acetaminophen or ibuprofen per NMDOH Standing Order for Fever on dose charts:

Dose Chart for Acetaminophen for Fever

Acetaminophen 10-15 mg/kg or by age dosing table below by mouth once a day at school as needed. Note: a student should not exceed 5 doses in 24 hours. The dosing chart below may be used, or the manufacture’s dose provided in/on the package. Use measuring device provided in package for accuracy.

Providing a dose range for body weight is not meant to imply a therapeutic decision but enables use of common medication formulations or practical dosing of pills or liquids, as well as developing a single dose for a range of body weights.

If body weight is known, then dosing by weight is preferred. If weight is not known or not readily available, dosing by age is appropriate.

Acetaminophen				Acetaminophen Dose Oral: tablet/caplet/capsule/liquid
	Weight-Based Dosing (Preferred)		Age-Based Dosing (Alternative)	
Brand names include Tylenol	Range of weight (lb)	Range of weight (kg)	Age group	
Recommended dose is 10-15 mg/kg body weight every 4 hours – max dose 1,000 mg	36.1-47.8 lb	16.4-21.7 kg	4-5 years	250 mg orally once
	47.9-60.0 lb	21.8-27.2 kg	6-8 years	250 mg orally once OR 325 mg orally once*
	60.1-71.9 lb	27.3-32.6 kg	9-10 years	325 mg orally once
	72.0-95.2 lb	32.7-43.2 kg	11-12 years	325 mg orally once OR 500 mg orally once*
	>95.3 lb	>43.2 kg	12+ years	500 mg orally once OR 650 mg orally once*

*May select depending on formulation available

Dose Chart for Ibuprofen for Fever

Ibuprofen by mouth 5-10 mg/kg or by using age dosing table below once a day at school as needed. A student should not exceed 4 doses in 24 hours. The dosing chart below may be used, or the manufacture’s dose provided in/on the package. Use measuring device provided in package for accuracy.

Providing a dose range for body weight is not meant to imply a therapeutic decision but enables use of common medication formulations or practical dosing of pills or liquids, as well as developing a single dose for a range of body weights.

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If body weight is known, then dosing by weight is preferred. If weight is not known or not readily available, dosing by age is appropriate.

Ibuprofen				Ibuprofen Dose Oral: tablet/caplet/capsule/liquid
	Weight-Based Dosing (Preferred)		Age-Based Dosing (Alternative)	
Brand names include Advil	Range of weight (lb)	Range of weight (kg)	Age group	
Recommended dose is 5-10 mg/kg body weight every 6 hours – max dose 1,200 mg	36.1-47.8 lb	16.4-21.7 kg	4-5 years	100 mg orally once
	47.9-60.0 lb	21.8-27.2 kg	6-8 years	200 mg orally once
	60.1-71.9 lb	27.3-32.6 kg	9-10 years	200 mg orally once
	72.0-95.2 lb	32.7-43.2 kg	11-12 years	300 mg orally once
	>95.3 lb	>43.2 kg	12+ years	400 mg orally once

A student with fever must remain in the health office until picked up. If the student is still in the health office after 30 minutes, reassess. If the student has not been picked up by a parent/guardian, consider contacting EMS if symptom severity is increasing.

Upon parental notification, provide the time when dose of OTC medication was given and how much was administered. This is to reduce the risk of excess medication administration. Students may return to school when the student has been fever-free for 24 hours with no fever reducing medication.

Advise parent/guardian student should follow PED toolkit guidance for consideration of Covid 19 before returning to school.

In addition, advise parent/guardian on care for a child with fever (see attached *What To Do If Your Child Has A High Temperature*).



Document the administration of the medication in the student's health record and the student's medication administration record. Contact the supervising physician as needed.

This NMDOH standing order for Over the Counter Medication Administration: Fever, shall remain in effect until rescinded or until July 1, 2023.



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Signature of ordering provider(s)

Licensed Prescriber	NPI	Signature	Date
Christopher Novak NE Region RHO (acting)	1508834110		05/28/22
Eugene Marciniak SE Region RHO (Acting)	1407830458	<i>Eugene Marciniak, MD.</i>	06/03/22
Eugene Marciniak SW Region RHO	1407830458	<i>Eugene Marciniak, MD.</i>	06/03/22
Christopher Novak NW Region RHO (acting)	1508834110		05/28/22

What to Do If Your Child Has A High Temperature

You can usually look after your child at home. The temperature should go down over 3 or 4 days.

Do

- Give them plenty of fluids
- Look out for signs of dehydration
- Give them food if they want it
- Check on your child regularly during the night
- Keep them at home
- Give them acetaminophen or ibuprofen if they're distressed or unwell
- Get medical advice if you're worried about your child

Don't

- Do NOT undress your child or sponge them down to cool them – fever is a natural and healthy response to infection
- Do NOT cover them up in too many clothes or bedclothes
- Do NOT give aspirin to children under 16 years of age
- Do NOT combine ibuprofen and acetaminophen, unless a provider tells you to
- Do NOT give ibuprofen to children with asthma

Urgent Advice

Get an urgent appointment with a provider if your child:

- Has other signs of illness, such as a rash, as well as a high temperature
- Has a high temperature (more than $>103^{\circ}\text{F}$) that's lasted for more than 5 days
- Does not want to eat, or is not their usual self and you're worried
- Has a high temperature (more than $>103^{\circ}\text{F}$) that does not come down with acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Is showing signs of dehydration – such as sunken eyes, no tears when they're crying, decreased urination

Serious Illness

It's quite rare for fever to be a sign of anything serious (like meningitis, a urinary tract infection, or blood infection)

Immediate action required: Call 911 or go to an urgent care/ER if your child:

- Has a stiff neck
- Has a rash that does not fade when you press a glass against it
- Is bothered by light
- Has a seizure (they cannot stop shaking)
- Has unusually cold hands and feet
- Has pale, blotchy, blue or grey skin
- Has a weak, high-pitched cry that's not like their normal cry
- Is drowsy and hard to wake
- Finds it hard to breathe and sucks their stomach in under their ribs

Adapted from <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/fever-in-children>

Qué Hacer Si Su Niño Tiene Fiebre Alta

Generalmente usted puede cuidar de su niño en casa. La fiebre le debe bajar en 3 o 4 días.

Hacer

- Deles suficientes fluídos
- Verifique si hay signos de deshidratación
- Deles comida si tienen hambre
- Verifique a su niño regularmente durante la noche
- Manténgalos en casa
- Deles acetaminophen/paracetamol o ibuprofen si están angustiados o no se sienten bien
- Reciba consejos médicos si usted tiene preocupaciones sobre su niño

No Hacer

- NO desnude a su niño o dé baños de esponja para enfriarlos – la fiebre es una respuesta natural y saludable contra infecciones
- NO los cubra con demasiada ropa o cobijas
- NO le dé aspirina a niños menores de 16 años
- NO combine ibuprofen y acetaminophen/paracetamol, a menos que un proveedor le haya dicho
- NO le dé ibuprofen a niños con asma

Advertencia Urgente

Obtenga una cita urgente con un proveedor si su niño:

- Tiene otros signos de enfermedad, tales como un salpullido, además de la fiebre alta
- Tiene una fiebre alta (más de >103°F) que ha durado más de 5 días
- No quiere comer, o no se comporta como lo es regularmente y a usted le preocupa
- Tiene una fiebre alta (más de >103°F) que no baja con acetaminophen/paracetamol o ibuprofen
- Muestra signos de deshidratación – como ojos hundidos, no hay lágrimas cuando lloran, disminución de orina

Enfermedad Seria

Es muy raro que la fiebre sea un signo de algo serio (como meningitis, una infección en el tracto urinario, o infección en la sangre)

Acción requerida inmediatamente: Llame al 911 o vaya a una sala de urgencias/sala de emergencias si su niño:

- Tiene rigidez en el cuello
- Tiene un salpullido que no desaparece cuando lo presiona con un vaso
- Le molesta la luz
- Tiene una convulsa (no puede parar de tembar)
- Tiene las manos y pies fríos fuera de lo normal
- Tiene la piel pálida, enrojecida, azul o gris
- Tiene un llanto débil, en tono agudo que no es el normal
- Está mareado y le es difícil despertar
- Se le hace difícil respirar y su estómago se esconde debajo de sus costillas cuando lo hace

Adaptación de <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/fever-in-children>