

New Survey Reveals Top Misperceptions Parents Have When Treating Their Child's Fever

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94 Percent of Pediatricians Say Parents Need More Education on Fever Management

"Parents play a dual role when their children are sick. They need to comfort a sick child while being prepared to make informed health choices. We want to help answer parents' questions about fever treatment so parents can help their kids get back to being kids."

[\(BUSINESS WIRE\)](#)--Tis' the season for sneezing, coughing and fevers. As the temperature drops and cold and flu season gets under way, parental anxiety is expected to rise. According to two new surveys of parents and pediatricians from Pfizer Consumer Healthcare, makers of Children's Advil[®], more than half of all parents report feeling anxious, fearful or helpless when their child comes down with a fever. In addition, many parents are not managing the fever correctly. This is nothing new to the vast majority of pediatricians (94 percent) who believe that parents need more fever management education.

In an effort to ease parents' anxiety and minimize risks, Children's Advil[®] is introducing a fever relief program this cold and flu season to educate parents on common misperceptions and best practices when it comes to treating a child's fever. To identify areas where education is most needed, Children's Advil[®] conducted two national surveys – one of parents and the other of pediatricians. The Children's Advil[®] *Dose of Reality* study, conducted online by Harris Interactive, polled more than 1,000 parents to uncover the most common misperceptions parents have when it comes to managing a child's fever. This was complemented by a survey of more than 250 pediatricians conducted by Sermo, to explore their views of parents' misperceptions and topics where education was most needed.

"As demonstrated in the survey, and as I see in my practice, even some of the most seasoned parents worry about fever. It's the most common reason I am paged after office hours," said Alanna Levine, M.D., nationally recognized pediatrician, mother and spokesperson for Children's Advil. "I like to reassure parents with 'fever phobia' that fever is their friend – it is a sign that their child's body is fighting infection. The goal of reducing the fever is really to make the child feel better. During this cold and flu season, all parents should be armed with the proper facts about fevers and how to manage them."

Fever Misperceptions Revealed

The *Dose of Reality* survey exposed several areas where parents may be making unintended mistakes in treating their child's fever. For example, more than half of parents surveyed (54 percent) wake their child up in the middle of the night just to give them fever medication. However, most pediatricians believe a sleeping child should not be awakened solely to be given fever medication, but close monitoring is always a good idea. Of course if parents have any concerns about treating their child's fever, they should check with their pediatrician.

Also, while the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends parents keep their child home from school or daycare until the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours, one in two parents (52 percent) admit to sending their child back to school or daycare less than 24 hours after their fever passed. The majority of pediatricians (72 percent) acknowledge hearing that parents send their child back to school or daycare within that 24 hour period, an action that poses a risk for the recovering child as well as other classmates.

Proper Dosing

Among the most concerning findings, the survey showed that many parents are not dosing their child in the most appropriate manner. In fact, nearly one in four parents (23 percent) admit to giving their child an adult over-the-counter fever medication at an estimated lower dose, rather than giving the child a medication made for children. This is something that one-third (34 percent) of pediatricians actually report hearing from their patients. Parents should never give an adult product to a child. Further, while weight-based dosing is the most appropriate way to dose children's fever medications, more than one-third of parents (36 percent) report administering their child's dose of medication based primarily on age rather than the preferred method which is weight, which can result in a child not getting the optimal dose.

“The pediatricians surveyed consistently hear three questions about fever medications: Which type is best for my child? At what temperature reading should I give medicine? And how do I correctly dose?” said Freda Lewis-Hall, MD, executive vice president, chief medical officer, Pfizer. “Parents play a dual role when their children are sick. They need to comfort a sick child while being prepared to make informed health choices. We want to help answer parents' questions about fever treatment so parents can help their kids get back to being kids.”

Moms vs. Dads: Differences in Fever Treatment

Another interesting finding was the difference in the way moms and dads approach fevers. The study found that while less than one third (32 percent) of all parents feel confident in treating a child's fever, more dads (41 percent) report feeling confident, compared to just one in four (25 percent) moms. But whereas dads may feel more confident, they are also more likely (57 percent of dads vs. 48 percent of moms) to send their child back to school or daycare prior to the 24-hour period of being fever free. Further, when it comes to determining the proper dose of medication for their child, more moms (65 percent) than dads (50 percent) base the dosage primarily on weight, which is the preferred method, as opposed to age.

Fever Relief Tips

To help parents better prepare for fevers during cold and flu season, Dr. Alanna Levine and the makers of Children's Advil[®] recommend the following tips to parents:

- **Stay Cool:** Remember that most fevers are in fact indicators that the body is fighting an underlying illness.
- **Be Prepared:** Start the season by talking to a pediatrician and gaining their insights on proper fever management. Also, check the medicine cabinet to ensure that all medications have not expired or been recalled.
- **Watch for Serious Signs:** Generally, it's time to call a pediatrician if your child is less than three months old and has a fever of 100 degrees or higher; the fever is over 103 degrees; if your child has a fever and looks and acts very sick; or if the fever lasts for more than a few days.
- **Long Lasting Relief:** When choosing a fever medication, be sure to consider how long the medication will last. Children's Advil[®], which contains ibuprofen, provides up to 8-hours of relief with one dose.

For more information on fevers or Children's Advil[®], please visit www.ChildrensAdvil.com or [Facebook.com/ChildrensAdvil](https://www.facebook.com/ChildrensAdvil).

About the Surveys

Data was collected from two national surveys: a survey of 1,026 parents of children ages 12 years and younger conducted online by Harris Interactive between October 31 and November 4, 2011; and a survey of 252 pediatricians conducted via Sermo, the largest online physician community.

About Children's Advil®

Children's Advil® is part of the Advil® line of products that also includes Advil®, Advil® Liqui-Gels, Advil® PM, Advil® Cold & Sinus, Advil® Allergy Sinus, Advil® Congestion Relief and Infants' Advil®. Children's Advil® relieves fever and minor aches and pains due to the cold and flu for children ages 2-11. It contains the medicine pediatricians recommend most among children's fever-reducers.

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