

5. Assessing and Classifying Fever

Objectives of the Session

By the end of the session, the ASHA will learn about:

- How to assess the child for fever.
- Identify signs for which urgent referral is required.
- Start the first line of treatment before referral.

Fever is a common problem among young children. A child with fever may have malaria or another disease such as simple cough or cold or other viral infection.

ASK: Does the child have fever?

Ask the mother if the child has fever. To check temperature, place the thermometer in the armpit for 2 minutes.

If you do not have a thermometer, place your hand on the tummy of the child to decide if the child feels hot to touch.

Fever is present if the mother is sure that her child has had fever, measured by the thermometer, or if you have determined that the child feels hot to touch.



ASK: For how long? If more than seven days, has fever been present every day?

Ask the mother how long the child has had fever. If the fever has been present every day for more than seven days, refer this child for further assessment.

LOOK or FEEL for stiff neck.

A child with fever and stiff neck may have meningitis. A child with meningitis needs urgent treatment with injectable antibiotics and referral to a hospital.

While you talk with the mother during the assessment, look to see if the child moves and bends his neck easily as he looks around. If the child is moving and bending his neck, he does not have a stiff neck.

If you did not see any movement, or if you are not sure, draw the child's attention to his umbilicus or toes. For example, you can shine a flashlight on his toes or umbilicus or tickle his toes to encourage the child to look down. Look to see if the child can bend his neck when he looks down at his umbilicus or toes.

