

# Fever

## Just the Facts

**F**ever and chills are signs of possible infection. A transplant patient is very vulnerable to infection the first weeks after conditioning therapy when the blood counts are low. It takes 9-12 months for the immune system to fully recover so the patient continues to be vulnerable to infections during this time.

Act promptly when a fever occurs because the patient cannot fight infection when the number of white blood cells is low.

## Your Goals:

- ✓ Monitor the patient's temperature.
- ✓ Call for professional help when the patient has a fever.



## Urgent Signs and Symptoms:

### Call the Clinic or the After Hours Clinic **NOW** if:

- ☐ A temperature of 38.3° C or 100.9° F or above by mouth. When taking an axillary (under the arm) temperature with children, call if the temperature is 37.7° C or 100° F.
- ☐ Fever greater than 1 degree above usual when the patient is on Prednisone.
- ☐ Shaking chills (temperature may be normal).

## Important Signs and Symptoms:

### Report symptoms to doctor or nurse during clinic hours today.

- ☐ Any new redness or swelling on the skin or at an intravenous (IV) site.
- ☐ Cold symptoms (runny nose, stuffy nose, watery eyes, sneezing, coughing).
- ☐ New abdominal or back pain.
- ☐ Toothache.

# What You Can Do At Home:

## **Monitor the patient's temperature.**

- ➡ Take the patient's temperature twice a day, morning and evening.
- ➡ Take oral (mouth) or axillary (under the arm) temperatures only. Do not take rectal temperature as the thermometer may injure membranes inside the rectum.
- ➡ Keep a record of the patient's temperature.
- ➡ Use the thermometer for the patient only.
- ➡ If using a glass thermometer, wash the thermometer after each use with warm (not hot) water and soap.

## **Get professional help when the patient has a fever.**

- ➡ Always check with the SCCA Clinic before trying measures to bring down fever.
- ➡ Do not give Tylenol® (unless directed by the doctor or nurse).
- ➡ When transporting the patient with chills to the SCCA Clinic or the After Hours Clinic, keep the patient warm and comfortable.