Fevers, Vomiting and Diarrhea

A fever occurs when a child's body temperature is higher than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit. Fevers are a common signal of illness in children and infants.

LISA
“You feel a little bit hot. Can you breathe okay?”

ELLIE
“Yeah.”

LISA
“Does it hurt anywhere?”

ELLIE
“No.”

LISA
“I think I better take your temperature.”

ELLIE
“Okay.”

LISA
“Alright, I’m gonna go get the first aid kit.”

Signals of fevers in children include: Skin that is hot to the touch, chills and body aches, headache, trouble sleeping or oversleeping, being unusually tired or irritable and a lack of appetite.

Signals for fevers in infants include being fussy or crying, becoming listless, and rapid breathing.

BABYSITTER
“I’m going to take your temperature and see if, see if you’re running a fever.”

If you suspect a child has a fever, take her temperature, following any instructions the parents gave you.

BABYSITTER
“So, I’m just going to turn this on. Alright. I’m just going to lift your ear up. Don’t worry this is not going to hurt. Alright, yeah, you’re definitely running a little bit of a fever. How ‘bout I go and call your mom.”
Okay, thank you so much.”

If the child has a fever, call the parents and follow their care instructions. In general, make a child with a fever as comfortable as possible, encourage rest and make sure she drinks plenty of clear fluids.

BABYSITTER

“There you go, little bit more, alright?”

BABYSITTER

“So, I just talked to your mom and she’s going to be home soon and she’ll make you feel better. How about for now, we get you lying down?”

ELLIE

“Okay.”

BABYSITTER

“Alright.”

Monitor the child for life-threatening conditions and call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number if a child or infant has trouble breathing or loses consciousness.

A fever that rapidly increases body temperature may lead to a seizure called a febrile seizure. Provide care as you would for any seizure.

ELLIE

“My tummy doesn’t feel too good.”

BABYSITTER

“Your tummy doesn’t feel too good?”

Vomiting and diarrhea are common signals of illness in children and infants and often occur with fevers. Although they can be scary for a young child, vomiting and diarrhea are rarely serious problems. They can, however, lead to dehydration, especially in young children. If vomiting or diarrhea is prolonged, the child may need to see a doctor.

If a child or infant is vomiting, hold her over a bowl while supporting her upper body.

Comfort and reassure her.

After the child finishes vomiting, wipe her mouth and face clean with a damp cloth.
Lay the child on her side and have her rest quietly. Make sure a clean bowl is nearby in case she vomits again.

BABYSITTER

“Got it. Okay, thank you. Bye.”

Call the parents and follow their care instructions. They may have specific instructions for reintroducing liquids or foods to the child.

When caring for a child with diarrhea, call the parents and follow their care instructions. They may have specific instructions for keeping the child hydrated or reintroducing foods.