Body heat is measured by taking a temperature with a thermometer. An increase in temperature, called a fever, may be a sign of infection.

The common scale used to measure body temperature in the United States is degrees Fahrenheit (°F). Other countries use degrees Centigrade (°C).

There are different ways to take a temperature. It is often measured using a digital thermometer orally, by placing it in the mouth, or axillary, meaning placing it under the arm in the armpit.

There are special thermometers that can take a tympanic (in the ear), temporal (on the forehead) or rectal temperature.

Take a baby’s temperature under the arm unless directed otherwise by the doctor. Talk with your health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

Buy a digital thermometer at your local grocery or drug store. Ask for help to find them in the store.

**Taking a Temperature Using a Digital Thermometer**

**Oral (Mouth)**

Do not put anything hot or cold in the mouth for 15 minutes before taking a temperature. This can affect the reading.

1. Take the thermometer out of its holder.
2. Clean the thermometer with soap and water or rubbing alcohol. You can also buy tip covers (called probe covers) that you throw away after use.
3. Turn the thermometer on. Check that the screen is clear of any earlier readings.
4. Place the tip of the thermometer under the tongue toward the back of the mouth.
5. Close the lips gently around the thermometer. Do not bite down. It may need to be held in place with a hand.
6. Keep the thermometer in place until it beeps.
7. Remove the thermometer.
8. Read the numbers in the window. These numbers are the temperature. Normal body temperature is 98.6 degrees F (37 degrees C) by mouth.

Call your doctor:
• If your temperature is greater than 101.5 degrees F by mouth.
  or
• Follow the directions of your doctor, if it is different.

Axillary (Under the Arm)
Wait 15 minutes after exercising or bathing before checking an axillary temperature. This can affect the reading.
1. Take the thermometer out of its holder.
2. Clean the thermometer with soap and water or rubbing alcohol. You can also buy tip covers (called probe covers) that you throw away after use.
3. Turn the thermometer on. Check that the screen is clear of any earlier readings.
4. Pat the armpit dry with a tissue or cloth. Do not rub when drying because rubbing may warm the skin.

Call your doctor:
• If your temperature is greater than 101.5 degrees F by mouth.
  or
• Follow the directions of your doctor, if it is different.

Axillary (Under the Arm)
Wait 15 minutes after exercising or bathing before checking an axillary temperature. This can affect the reading.
1. Take the thermometer out of its holder.
2. Clean the thermometer with soap and water or rubbing alcohol. You can also buy tip covers (called probe covers) that you throw away after use.
3. Turn the thermometer on. Check that the screen is clear of any earlier readings.
4. Pat the armpit dry with a tissue or cloth. Do not rub when drying because rubbing may warm the skin.

Call your doctor:
• If your temperature is greater than 101.5 degrees F by mouth.
  or
• Follow the directions of your doctor, if it is different.
5. Put the tip under the arm and rest the arm down across the body.

6. Keep the thermometer in place until it beeps.

7. Remove the thermometer.

8. Read the numbers in the window. These numbers are the temperature. Normal body temperature is 97.6 degrees F (36.4 degrees C) under the arm.

Call your doctor:

- Babies less than 2 months old: a temperature higher than 99.8 degrees F (37.7 degrees C) under the arm.
- Babies older than 2 months, children and adults: a temperature higher than 100.5 degrees F (38 degrees C) under the arm.

or

- Follow the directions of your doctor, if it is different.

بالنسبة للأطفال الرضع الذين تقل أعمارهم عن شهرين: إذا زادت درجة الحرارة عن 99.8 درجة مئوية (37.7 درجة مئوية) عند قياسها أسفل الذراع.

بالنسبة للأطفال الأكبر من شهرين والأطفال والبالغين: إذا زادت درجة الحرارة عن 100.5 درجة مئوية (38 درجة مئوية) عند قياسها أسفل الذراع.

وأو

- يجب اتباع توجيهات الطبيب، إذا كان الأمر مختلفًا.