A calmer plan.
A clearer next step.

A quick-reference guide for caregivers of babies from birth to 12 months. Keep urgent advice visible and seek professional care whenever you are concerned.

Emergency numbers shown are for the United States. Elsewhere, use your local emergency service.

CALL 911: serious emergency signs

• Not breathing normally, struggling for breath, or blue/gray lips or tongue.

• Unresponsive, suddenly limp, extremely difficult to wake, or having a seizure.

• Severe choking with inability to breathe, cry or cough effectively.

• Serious injury, uncontrolled bleeding, or a severe allergic reaction with breathing trouble.

Call emergency services immediately. Follow the dispatcher’s instructions. Do not delay to read, print or complete a checklist.

SEEK URGENT MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

• Under 3 months: a rectal temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher needs immediate medical assessment—even if baby otherwise seems well.

• Green vomit, blood in vomit or stool, a swollen painful belly, or a non-blanching rash with illness needs urgent assessment.

• Poor feeding, repeated vomiting or diarrhea, fewer wet diapers, dry mouth, or unusual sleepiness: contact your pediatrician promptly. Do not wait for a fixed number of missed feeds or hours without urine.

• New breathing effort, rapidly worsening symptoms, worsening injury, or a baby who seems very unwell: seek urgent care now. Call emergency services for severe symptoms.

Suspected poisoning: call Poison Control 1-800-222-1222 in the US. For collapse, seizure or breathing trouble, call 911. Do not induce vomiting.

Know what to share

Calling your pediatrician

• Baby’s age and any medical conditions

• What changed, when it began, and whether it is worsening

• Temperature, measurement method and time

• Recent feeds and wet diapers

• Breathing, alertness, vomiting, stool or rash changes

• Medicines already given, amount and time

0–3 months

• Fever at or above 100.4°F (38°C), measured rectally: call immediately and arrange urgent medical assessment. Do not wait for fever medicine to work.

• Call promptly for feeding changes, unusual sleepiness, jaundice, vomiting/diarrhea, or cord redness, swelling or discharge.

• If you cannot reach your clinician promptly for an urgent concern, go to an emergency department.

3–6 months

• Call promptly for fever with poor feeding, breathing changes, repeated vomiting/diarrhea, unusual sleepiness or a new concerning rash.

• Tell your clinician the temperature, how it was measured, and how baby is behaving. Do not wait for a higher temperature if baby looks ill.

• Confirm with your clinician which medicines and doses are appropriate; do not use a medicine response to decide whether baby needs care.

6–12 months

• Call promptly for fever with illness, ear pain, feeding changes, dehydration signs, or worsening bumps or injuries.

• A loss of normal responsiveness, breathing trouble or severe symptoms is urgent at any age.

• Ask about any symptom that worries you. Age bands do not make a concerning symptom safe to wait on.

Where to go

Emergency symptoms: emergency services or an emergency department. For non-emergency concerns, call your pediatrician or after-hours service. Urgent-care clinics may have infant age restrictions; call ahead. Do not let location preferences delay emergency care.

Preparation is peace.

A practical caregiver checklist

- Save the pediatrician and after-hours numbers
- Know the nearest emergency department and local emergency number
- Share an updated emergency card privately with caregivers
- Learn infant CPR and choking response from an accredited instructor
- Keep a digital thermometer and clinician-approved supplies accessible to adults
- Secure medicines, chemicals, button batteries, magnets and small parts
- Check gates and furniture anchors before baby becomes mobile
- Use a firm, flat, clear crib or bassinet; place baby on their back for sleep

Share the plan privately

Fill in the separate one-page emergency information card by hand. Keep copies in the diaper bag and with trusted caregivers; update numbers, allergies and medicines when they change. This card is information, not legal consent for treatment.

A few important safeguards

Never leave baby unattended in a bath or on an elevated surface. Follow safe feeding and sleep guidance. Ask your clinician about medication doses and hydration plans—this guide does not prescribe treatment. Learn infant CPR and choking response with accredited hands-on instruction.

About this updated guide

Adapted from the original Waivy article and its Gamma-exported guide. Conflicting fever thresholds, arbitrary waiting windows, medication suggestions and unverified statistics were removed. Fever at 100.4°F (38°C) or higher in a baby under three months is included. No download can replace clinical assessment.

Sources / reviewed 5 November 2026

Original Waivy Get Help article
https://www.waivybaby.com/get-help

AAP: Fever
https://www.healthychildren.org/English/tips-tools/symptom-checker/Pages/symptomviewer.aspx?symptom=Fever

AAP: Trouble breathing
https://www.healthychildren.org/English/tips-tools/symptom-checker/Pages/symptomviewer.aspx?symptom=Trouble+Breathing

AAP: Dehydration
https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/injuries-emergencies/Pages/dehydration.aspx