

## HYPERTHERMIA

Elevated body temperature (hyperthermia) is a special problem for children who have Ectodermal Dysplasia because of decreased ability to sweat. Sweating is an important mechanism for the body to contend with raised body temperature.

With fever from infections the source of infection should be identified. Infections caused by bacteria and a few viruses may be treatable with medicines to kill the infecting organism, thereby reducing the severity and/or direction of the illness. Moderate elevation of body temperature, up to 104°-105°F (40°-40.5°C), will not cause brain damage. Prolonged high temperature elevations (several hours at 106°F or higher) increases the risk for permanent damage to brain cells.

To lower body temperature in children who have Ectodermal Dysplasia, remove clothing and sponge the skin with luke warm water and a fan. The sponging and fanning should continue until the body temperature is lowered. This may take one or more hours. Water so cold that it induces shivering should not be used as shivering generates more body heat. Contact your doctor if you suspect an infection or an inflammation is causing the hyperthermia. The best "treatment" for hyperthermia due to lack of ability to sweat is prevention! Planning outdoor activities for the cooler parts of the day; encouraging children to drink plenty of cool fluids; prudent use of shade, fans and air conditioning are ways to avoid overheating.

Another important strategy is to intersperse periods of exercise with periods of rest – the body's own raised level of heat production during exercise is often the major cause of overheating.

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## Supporting a normal lifestyle

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