INFORMATION ON VITAL SIGNS

TEMPERATURE

There are two kinds of thermometer scales: Centigrade (°C) and Fahrenheit (°F). Either can be used to measure a person’s temperature in degrees (37°C means 37 degrees Centigrade). See p. 31.

Here is how they compare:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature Scale</th>
<th>Centigrade (°C)</th>
<th>Fahrenheit (°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 35° C</td>
<td>TOO LOW</td>
<td>Below 95° F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35° C</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>95° F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37° C</td>
<td>NORMAL</td>
<td>98.6° F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 39° C</td>
<td>FEVER</td>
<td>Above 102° F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HIGH FEVER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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PULSE OR HEARTBEAT

For a person at rest:

- ADULTS: ...... 60 to 80 beats per minute is typical.
- CHILDREN: ... 80 to 100 beats per minute is typical.
- BABIES: ...... 100 to 140 beats per minute is typical.
- NEWBORNS: ... 120 to 160 beats per minute is typical.

For each degree Centigrade (C) of fever, the heartbeat usually increases about 20 beats per minute.

RESPIRATION

For a person at rest:

- ADULTS AND OLDER CHILDREN: .12 to 20 breaths per minute is typical.
- CHILDREN: ........ up to 30 breaths per minute is typical.
- BABIES: .......... up to 40 breaths per minute is typical.
- NEWBORNS: ....... 30 to 60 breaths per minute is typical.

More than 40 shallow breaths a minute usually means pneumonia (see p. 171) for a child or an adult. For babies, 50–60 breaths per minute probably means pneumonia.

BLOOD PRESSURE (This is included for health workers who have the equipment to measure blood pressure.)

For a person at rest, 120/80 is typical, but this varies a lot.

If the first reading (when the sound begins), is over 160, or if the second reading (when the sound disappears), is over 100, this is a danger sign of high blood pressure (see p. 125).