## Traffic light system for identifying risk of serious illness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color (of skin, lips or tongue)</th>
<th>Green – low risk</th>
<th>Amber – intermediate risk</th>
<th>Red – high risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Normal colour</td>
<td>• Pallor reported by parent/carer</td>
<td>• Pale/mottled/ashen/blue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Activity
- • Responds normally to social cues
- • Content/smiles
- • Stays awake or awakens quickly
- • Strong normal cry/not crying
- • Not responding normally to social cues
- • No smile
- • Wakes only with prolonged stimulation
- • Decreased activity
- • No response to social cues
- • Appears ill to a healthcare professional
- • Does not wake or if roused does not stay awake
- • Weak, high-pitched or continuous cry

### Respiratory
- • Nasal flaring
- • Tachypnoea:
  - RR >50 breaths/minute, age 6–12 months
  - RR >40 breaths/minute, age >12 months
- • Oxygen saturation ≤95% in air
- • Crackles in the chest
- • Grunting
- • Tachypnoea: RR >60 breaths/minute
- • Moderate or severe chest indrawing

### Circulation and hydration
- • Normal skin and eyes
- • Moist mucous membranes
- • Tachycardia:
  - >160 beats/minute, age <12 months
  - >150 beats/minute, age 12–24 months
  - >140 beats/minute, age 2–5 years
- • CRT ≥3 seconds
- • Dry mucous membranes
- • Poor feeding in infants
- • Reduced skin turgor
- • Reduced skin turgor

### Other
- • None of the amber or red symptoms or signs
- • Age 3–6 months, temperature ≥39°C
- • Fever for ≥5 days
- • Rigors
- • Swelling of a limb or joint
- • Non-weight bearing limb/not using an extremity
- • Age <3 months, temperature ≥38°C
- • Non-blanching rash
- • Bulging fontanelle
- • Neck stiffness
- • Status epilepticus
- • Focal neurological signs
- • Focal seizures

CRT, capillary refill time; RR, respiratory rate
* Some vaccinations have been found to induce fever in children aged under 3 months

This traffic light table should be used in conjunction with the recommendations in the NICE guideline on fever in under 5s.