

Health Alert: Strep Throat

Strep throat is a bacterial infection that can make one's throat feel sore and scratchy. Strep throat is most common in children, but it affects people of all ages.

Although strep throat accounts for only a small portion of sore throats, it is important to see a doctor for prompt testing and treatment, as certain kinds of strep may cause significant problems if left untreated. It is impossible to tell if a sore throat is caused by strep by just looking at the throat itself – a throat culture or strep test is needed to diagnose strep accurately.

Other bacterial causes of a sore throat exist, but strep is by far the most common. It requires a visit to your doctor and treatment with antibiotics. Usually, the antibiotic of choice for treating strep throat is a penicillin drug or other substitutes if a person is allergic to penicillin.

For the latest information on Strep Throat, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/groupastrep/diseases-public/strep-throat.html>

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at Schoolhealth@onenessfamily.org.

Strep Throat Symptoms

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please keep them home and consult a doctor:

- Significant fever of approximately 101 degrees Fahrenheit or higher;
- Pus or white spots on either or both the tonsils and throat area when the tonsils have been previously removed;
- Swollen, tender lymph nodes in the throat area, just below the ear, where the jaw bone and neck meet, and a feeling of being sicker than you normally would be with a cold.

Treatment requires a visit to your doctor and a prescription for antibiotics. Usually, the antibiotic of choice for treating strep throat is a penicillin drug or other substitutes if a person is allergic to penicillin.

When treated with an antibiotic, a strep throat usually gets better rapidly. The pain goes away within 24 to 48 hours, and you will feel relatively well. Problems that can come from

untreated strep include:

- rheumatic fever, which can cause arthritis and heart problems;
- nephritis, which is a kidney inflammation resulting in bleeding into the kidney and urine;
- Scarlet fever, also known as scarlatina, is another non-serious but common complication of strep throat. The main symptom of scarlet fever is a skin rash that looks like pinkish-red goosebumps. This rash usually starts under the arms and in the groin area, then spreads to the rest of the body.

Prevention

It is important to remember that a sore throat-whether or not caused by a virus or bacteria-is contagious. Preventing its spread is helped by good handwashing, not sharing utensils, or drinking from the same container the ill person uses. Please see your healthcare provider immediately if you suspect your child may be infected.