



FACT SHEET: STREP THROAT

Strep throat is a bacterial infection in the nose and throat and can sometimes cause scarlet fever. Strep throat is most common in children aged 5-18 years, but can also affect adults.

SYMPTOMS OF STREP THROAT

Symptoms of strep throat include very sore throat, headache, swollen neck nodes and painful swallowing, fever, white patches on the tonsils, nausea or an upset stomach.

Children with scarlet fever may also develop a fine, red rash appearing on the neck, chest, under the arms, elbows, inner thigh and groin. The rash may appear one to four days after initial symptoms begin and can look like a sunburn and feel like sandpaper. A “strawberry” red and bumpy appearance to tongue may be seen.

HOW IT IS SPREAD

The germ, called Group A Streptococcus, is spread directly by saliva or nasal discharge of an infected person. It can also be spread through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or by sharing drinking glasses.

Symptoms take two to five days to develop if you become infected by someone else with the germ.

HOW TO TREAT AND PREVENT

If you or someone you are caring for feel unwell, seek medical care. These infections need to be treated with antibiotics.

If your child does have strep throat or scarlet fever:

- Hand washing is the best thing that you can do to prevent the spread of infection
- Teach your child to cover their mouth and nose when they cough or sneeze
- Encourage rest and drinking fluids
- Keep your child home from child care or school until the antibiotic has been given for at least one full day (24-hours)
- Take all the medications as prescribed by your doctor, even if the signs of illness have gone away
- See your healthcare provider if symptoms do not improve within a few days