



# Strep Throat and Scarlet Fever

## Parent Resource Template

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### DEFINITION

- **Strep throat** is a disease caused by group A. *Streptococcus* bacteria.
- **Scarlet fever** is a fine, red rash that makes the skin feel like sandpaper. The rash is usually prominent in the armpit and groin areas. It is caused by a toxin produced by a strep infection. Children who have scarlet fever are generally not any sicker than children with strep throat who do not have the rash.

### SYMPTOMS

- Sore throat (early symptom)
- Pain with swallowing
- Fever
- Red, swollen tonsils, sometimes with white patches or streaks of pus.
- Tiny red spots on roof of mouth
- Stomachache
- Headache
- Swollen lymph nodes in the front of the neck.
- Nausea/vomiting
- The most frequent cause of sore throat in children is a viral infection, not strep throat. The only way to be certain of a strep throat diagnosis is by getting a throat culture or rapid strep test by a healthcare provider.

## **PREVENTION**

- Good handwashing and not sharing personal items.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.

## **TREATMENT**

- Have a healthcare provider evaluate individuals with a severe sore throat that lasts >24 hours or a severe sore throat with a rash to see if treatment is needed.
- Positive throat cultures are treated with antibiotics.
- Sore throats can be soothed by gargling with warm water and salt.

## **RETURN TO SCHOOL**

- Children diagnosed with this condition should stay home from school until they are fever free (without the use of fever-reducing medications) and have been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours.

## **CALL YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER**

- If your child has any of the major symptoms described above (especially fever, severe sore throat and/or swollen lymph nodes).
- The concern with this infection is due to possible complications involving the heart and kidneys that can follow a strep infection, if not treated by antibiotics.

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Information compiled from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control