

SCARLET FEVER FACT SHEET

What is scarlet fever?

Scarlet fever occurs mainly in children between the ages of 5 and 18 who are infected with group A streptococci bacteria. Scarlet fever can occur at any time of the year but is more common in the colder seasons. Once a person has scarlet fever, they usually **do not** get it again.

What are the symptoms?

- Fever
- A very red, sore throat
- Flushing of the cheeks
- Tongue with deep red appearance (strawberry-colored)
- A red rash with a sandpaper feel

What are some serious complications with scarlet fever?

- Rheumatic fever (affects the joints and heart)
- Acute kidney disease

Look out for these symptoms that may lead to those conditions:

- High fever
- Blood in urine
- Inflamed glands of the neck
- Earache
- Skin infection

Most cases of scarlet fever are mild, but still need to be treated.

More Information: www.cdc.gov/Features/ScarletFever

How can it be spread?

- Droplets from the nose, mouth or throat or direct contact with an infected person
- People are **most contagious** 1-2 days before the rash appears and 4-5 days after
- **When treated with proper medicine, people are no longer contagious after 24 hours**

How is it treated?

- See your doctor
- Take antibiotics as prescribed, **even if you start feeling better**
- Rest and drink plenty of fluids

How can it be prevented?

- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing then throw it away
- Sneeze or cough into elbow if no tissue is available
- Wash your hands after touching any nasal or oral secretions
- Wash your children's hands after coughing and sneezing

