

## STREP THROAT FACT SHEET

### What is Strep Throat?

Strep throat is an infection of the throat that is caused by group A Streptococcus bacteria. It commonly occurs in school aged children and adolescents. If not treated correctly, the infection can lead to sinus infections, rheumatic fever, ear infections, and abscesses (pockets of pus) around the tonsils.

### What are the symptoms?

- Throat pain that usually comes on quickly
- Red and swollen tonsils, sometimes with white patches or streaks of pus
- Pain or difficulty swallowing
- Fever (101°F or above)
- Sand-paper like rash
- Headache, nausea or vomiting

**Symptoms can appear 2 to 5 days after exposure to bacteria.**

A cough is usually a sign that the illness is viral and NOT strep throat.

### How can it be prevented?

- **Always** wash hands with warm, soapy water for 20 seconds after touching any nasal or oral secretions and before preparing or eating food
- Cover coughs or sneezes with tissues or a sleeve
- Teach children to wash their hands with soap and water each time they sneeze or cough
- Hand washing is the best way to prevent disease

More Information: <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/strepthroat>

### How can it be spread?

- When an infected person sneezes or coughs in the air of another person
- If infected secretions are touched and then the face or mouth is touched

### How is it treated?

- Antibiotics (taken as prescribed)
- Getting plenty of rest and fluids
- **An infected person is contagious until after 24 hours of antibiotic use**

