

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?

Symptoms may include:

- Throat pain that usually comes on quickly
- Red and swollen tonsils, sometimes with white patches or streaks of pus
- Pain or difficulty swallowing
- Fever
- 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 is it spread?

- By breathing in droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person, or by touching something with droplets on it and then touching your mouth or nose
- By drinking from the same glass or eating from the same plate as an infected person

An infected person is contagious until after 24 hours of antibiotic use.

How is it treated?

- With antibiotics (taken as prescribed)
- By getting plenty of rest and fluids

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. **Hand washing is the best way to prevent disease.**
- Cover coughs or sneezes with tissues or a sleeve.
- Teach children to cover their coughs and sneezes and to wash their hands with soap and water each time they cough or sneeze.

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

This FACT SHEET is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a healthcare provider. For more information call your healthcare provider.

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