

Strep Throat

Group A Beta-Hemolytic Streptococcus causes Strep Throat.

It is a bacterium often found in the throat and on the skin. People may carry this bacterium and have no symptoms. The incubation period is 2 to 5 days. The infection is most common in children between 5 and 12 years of age.

Of all sore throats, only 5 to 10 % are caused by bacteria.

Spread : It is spread through direct contact with mucus from the nose or throat of a person who is infected or through contact with infected sores on the skin. Ill persons who have strep throat or skin infections, such as impetigo, are most likely to spread the infection. Those who carry the bacteria but have no symptoms are far less contagious.



Spread can occur via the airborne route and commonly via the hand of an infected person who has just used his hand to wipe his nose or coughed into his hand. Hand to hand spread is very common. Touching a surface that has the infected body fluids on it is another way to spread the disease.

Once an infected person has been treated for 24 hours with an antibiotic, that person is no longer contagious.

Symptoms : sore throat, fever higher than 101 degrees F., chills, body aches, headaches, swollen lymph nodes in the neck and nausea or pain in the abdomen. Sometimes, a sandpaper-like rash on the chest, abdomen and back occurs. This is scarlet fever, another form of a strep infection which is treated with the same antibiotic. This rash is often seen in children under the age of 18 years.

A cough is less likely to be a symptom.

Diagnosis : Throat culture is the gold standard for diagnosis. The sensitivity of throat culture for Group A BH Strep is 90%. The rapid strep test has a sensitivity of only 76 to 87%.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS SYMPTOMS OF A STREP INFECTION, CALL YOUR MEDICAL PROVIDER.

Treatment : Antibiotic prescribed by the doctor. After the child has been treated for 24 hours, she is no longer contagious. It is vital to take all of the doses indicated.

What helps: Warm liquids like soup or cold foods like popsicles help to ease the pain of a sore throat. Children need lots of fluids.

Prevention: **GOOD HANDWASHING** (singing the Happy Birthday song twice while scrubbing with soap or hand sanitizer) – after coughing or sneezing, after using the bathroom, before preparing foods or eating.



RINSE TOOTHBRUSHES WELL



Information from CDC : Bacterial, Mycotic Diseases 10/11/2005
American Family Physician : Management of Group A
Beta-Hemolytic Streptococcal Pharyngitis 04/15/2001

Joan P. Callahan R.N.,B.S.N.
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