

Strep Throat

Strep throat is a throat infection caused by strep bacteria. The bacteria are spread by fluid droplets from the nose or throat of someone with strep. This occurs most often during cold winter months when people are together indoors. You can get a strep throat 2 to 7 days after being around a person who has it.

Signs of a Strep Throat

- Fever above 100.5° F or 38° C
- Chills
- Throat pain
- Trouble swallowing
- Neck swelling
- Trouble breathing
- Body aches
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea or vomiting
- Abdominal pain

The tonsils and the back of the throat may look red or swollen, and be dotted with white or yellow spots of pus.

Some rare cases of strep infection may produce a toxin that causes a bright red skin rash over your body. This rash is called scarlet fever.

Your Care

If you have signs of strep throat, see your doctor. Your doctor will check the back of your throat for redness, swelling, and white or yellow spots. A rapid strep test may be done by swabbing the back of your throat to check for strep bacteria. Results are often ready within 10 minutes.

If your test shows you have strep throat, you will be treated with antibiotic medicine. This can be given as a one-time shot or as pills to be taken at home. **You must take all of the pills as ordered.**

- You may return to work or school after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and when you no longer have a fever.
- Replace your toothbrush after you have taken the antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Drink a lot of liquids.
- Use a cool-mist humidifier to add moisture to the air.
- Take your temperature at least one time each day, and treat a fever as your doctor orders.
- Do not share glasses or cups, eat off of other people's plates, or share other people's food.
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash your hands after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose

Call your doctor if your signs do not improve or if someone else in your family gets signs of strep throat.