

We have been seeing a lot of sore throats the two past weeks and we have had some students with positive *Streptococcus* cultures.

Please, if your child has symptoms of a sore throat, consider having a rapid throat swab done and culture. If a Strep throat is not cured with an antibiotic, it can lead to further disease and harm. Please read below for more information.

Group A *Streptococcus* (GAS) (group A strep bacteria) cause strep throat and are **contagious**.

GAS is the most common cause of bacterial pharyngitis in children and adolescents. In temperate climates, the incidence of strep throat peaks during the winter and early spring [5]. GAS pharyngitis is most common in school-age children but may occur in younger children, especially if they have contact with school-age children [5,6].

Symptoms

It usually takes 2 to 5 days after exposure to become ill with strep throat.

Common symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Pain when swallowing
- Red and swollen tonsils
- Sore throat that started very quickly and may look red
- Swollen lymph nodes in the front of the neck
- Tiny, red spots on the roof of the mouth, called petechiae
- White patches or streaks of pus on the tonsils

Less common symptoms, especially for children, may include:

- Headache

- Nausea or vomiting
- Rash (scarlet fever)
- Stomach pain

Complications

Complications can occur after a strep throat infection if the bacteria spread to other parts of the body.

Complications can include:

- Abscesses (pockets of pus) around the tonsils or in the neck
- Ear infections
- Post-streptococcal glomerulonephritis (a kidney disease)
- Rheumatic fever (a disease affecting the heart, joints, brain, skin)
- Sinus infections

Age

Strep throat is **more common in children** than adults.

- **Most common:** Children 5 through 15 years old
- **Rare:** Children younger than 3 years old

Close contact

Close contact with another person with strep throat is the **most common risk factor** for illness. For example, if someone has strep throat, the bacteria often spread to other people in their household.

Contact with children: Parents of school-age children and adults who are often in contact with children are at increased risk.

Crowded settings can increase the risk of getting any group A streptococcal infection including strep throat. These settings include:

- Daycare centers and schools
- Detention or correctional facilities

- Homeless shelters
- Military training facilities

Testing and diagnosis

Healthcare providers can use **2 types of tests** to diagnose strep throat.

What to do if you've tested positive

Healthcare providers treat strep throat and scarlet fever with antibiotics.

Call a healthcare provider if you or your child aren't feeling better after taking antibiotics for 48 hours.

When to return to work or school

Stay home from work, school, or daycare until you **no longer have a fever**. You also need to **have taken antibiotics** for at least 24 hours.

References:

CDC: [About Strep Throat | Group A Strep | CDC](#)

UpToDate: [Group A streptococcal tonsillopharyngitis in children and adolescents: Clinical features and diagnosis - UpToDate](#)