

## STREP THROAT

Strep throat is caused by a streptococcal infection in the throat. Symptoms include fever, headache, stomach ache, vomiting and a sore throat. They do NOT include runny nose, hoarse voice or coughing. A rapid strep test or throat culture is needed to make the diagnosis. Strep throat is treated with antibiotics. If not treated it may lead to rheumatic fever, although it is rare. With early treatment all symptoms will be gone in one to two days. Strep is no longer contagious after approximately 24 hours on antibiotics. Without treatment symptoms will last up to 4 days, and the strep can be contagious for up to one month. If a throat culture is negative, the symptoms are probably caused by a viral infection, and usually an antibiotic will not be necessary.

Rarely, strep can cause inflammation of the kidney, leading to blood in the urine. Permanent damage does not usually occur. Treatment will not prevent involvement of the kidney.

Please, do not treat any sore throat with antibiotics at home before calling us. Even one dose of an antibiotic is enough to prevent strep from growing on a culture, yet is not enough to actually treat the infection. Do not ever give prescriptions medications without medical supervision. You may give your child Tylenol or Motrin to help relieve a sore throat. Ice pops also may offer some comfort.