

Strep Throat

School Name
School Nurse Name
Phone Number
Date

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you that there has been an increase in the number of students at school reporting strep throat infections. While most sore throats are caused by viruses, strep throat is caused by a bacteria called A Streptococcus (Group A Strep). Strep throat is generally a mild infection but can be quite painful and requires treatment of prescription antibiotics. The following information is intended to help you understand more about strep throat and how to prevent further spread.

What is strep throat? Strep throat is a bacterial infection that can affect all ages but is more common in children.

What are the symptoms? Symptoms of strep throat can include a painful, red throat and difficulty swallowing, swollen/tender lymph nodes, fever, headache, and nausea/vomiting. A fine, sandpaper-like rash, known as scarlet fever, in the creases of the joints and on the stomach, may also be present. Runny nose, cough, hoarseness, and other “common cold” type symptoms are usually indicative of a viral infection and NOT strep throat. It is also important to note that there are some people infected with strep throat who never develop symptoms but might just be “carriers” of the bacteria. They are less likely to spread the infection than individuals who experience symptoms.

How is it treated? Strep throat is treated by and responds quickly to prescription antibiotics. It is critical to administer the antibiotics to your child as directed and until it is gone (even after your child begins to feel better). If age appropriate, salt water gargles, sucking on hard candies (especially butterscotch!), and cold from popsicles and milkshakes can help alleviate the throat pain. Your child’s pediatrician may also advise OTC pain medication or a fever reducer. Additionally, rest and hydration are important.

What are the risks? Complications from strep are rare but can occur if the bacteria spread to other parts of the body. Dehydration can also occur due to the sore throat and difficulty swallowing. Signs of dehydration include dry mouth and throat, decrease in urination, dizziness, and increased fussiness. If dehydration is suspected, prompt evaluation by your child’s healthcare provider is required as treatment with IV fluids and other medical care may be necessary.

How does it spread? Strep throat is spread through the respiratory droplets of an infected person. Symptoms typically develop 2–5 days after exposure.

How long should children with strep throat stay away from school? Children with strep throat can return to school 12–24 hours after starting antibiotics. They should feel well enough to be in school and meet all other exclusion criteria (including fever).

What should you do now? Monitor your child for symptoms of strep throat and notify your child’s pediatrician and school nurse if, at any time, you suspect your child may be infected. To help prevent spread, encourage good hand washing habits, disinfect surfaces, discourage sharing of food and beverages, and teach appropriate sneeze and cough hygiene to your child.

Thank you for your careful attention to the information in this notice and for your diligence in helping to keep our school community as safe and healthy as possible. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to the school nurse with any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
School Nurse Name