

## Strep Throat

Your child has been diagnosed as having strep throat. While most sore throats are viral, about 10% of sore throats are caused by a bacterium called streptococcus. The treatment of strep throat can prevent some rare but serious complications, namely rheumatic fever (heart disease) or glomerulonephritis (kidney disease). Untreated, these complications can occur although the sore throat will go away by itself without treatment. Appropriate treatment usually eliminates the sore throat and fever within about 24 hours.

Your child has been given an antibiotic to treat his/her strep throat. If he has been given amoxicillin, there are a few things you need to know. Make sure the child takes all 10 days of the medicine and that he feels better within 24 to 48 hours. There are now germs that live in the throat that can inactivate amoxicillin so any child that does not get over their sore throat within 48 hours needs to come back and repeat the strep test. If the test is still positive, a different antibiotic will usually be given.

It is also important to remember that strep infections can reoccur. So, if your child gets better within 48 hours, but two to three days after the amoxicillin is completed, they get a sore throat again, a strep test must be repeated. If this test is positive, a different antibiotic will be given.

Amoxicillin is still the drug of choice for treatment of strep throat. If your child is allergic to amoxicillin, he has been given Erythromycin-like compound for his strep throat or one of the Cephalosporins.

If your child has been given a different medicine for his strep throat, i.e. Augmentin, Zithromax, Cleocin, Cefzil, Duracef, Lorabid, or Vantin, it is because we feel there is a chance there are germs in the child's tonsils that can inactivate amoxicillin.

Strep is contagious and your child should stay away from school for 24 hours after starting the antibiotic. Some people feel that people are only contagious 14-15 hours after starting the antibiotic so you may want to time the return to school on this basis. The incubation period for strep is 2 to 5 days so, if another child in the family gets a sore throat, please contact our office.

In the future, please remember that just because your child has a sore throat, it does not mean it is a strep throat. One of the greatest problems in our practice is that parents will give their child an antibiotic over the weekend, schedule a visit for Monday and expect the diagnosis to be strep throat. Strep tests are usually negative after 15 to 24 hours of treatment. Most people, unless they are very ill with strep, can go with a sore throat for a day or so without treatment.

**PLEASE REPLACE YOUR CHILD'S TOOTHBRUSH AS IT MAY CARRY STREP GERMS WHICH COULD RE-INFECT YOUR CHILD!**

If you have any questions, please call the office.

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