



SCARLET FEVER/STREP THROAT

What is scarlet fever/strep throat?

- Strep throat is a disease caused by bacteria called group A streptococcus. Scarlet fever is a rash that sometimes occurs in people that have strep throat. The rash of scarlet fever is usually seen in children under the age of 18.

What are the symptoms?

- Tiny red bump rash on the chest and abdomen, then spreading over the body. It looks like a sunburn and feels like a piece of sandpaper
- Flushed face, pale around the lips
- Fever of 101 degrees or higher is common with strep throat
- The throat is very red and sore, often with white or yellow patches
- Swollen neck glands
- Tongue looks like a strawberry because the normal bumps are bigger
- Occasionally nausea and vomiting

How is it spread?

- By direct contact with discharge from coughing, sneezing or talking of infected person and nasal carrier
- Illness usually appears 2-5 days after contact
- The rash is not contagious

How is it diagnosed and treated?

- Primary care provider evaluation and laboratory cultures for strep throat
- Strep throat is treated with oral antibiotics
- Treatment for scarlet fever is aimed at relief of symptoms

Can it be prevented?

- No vaccine is available

Should the sick child be isolated?

- No

When can the child return to day care or school?

- Strep throat-after evaluation by physician and under antibiotic treatment for 24 hours
- Scarlet fever-rash is not contagious, so child may return when he/she feels well enough

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, call your health care provider.