



## STREP THROAT - GROUP A STREP

Dear Patient at Forest Hills Pediatrics:

A rapid test for Group A Strep from a swab of your throat was positive. You have Strep Throat. Strep Throat is an infection of the throat caused by a particular bacterium, *streptococcus pyogenes group A*. In Strep Throat, both the throat and the tonsils are inflamed. This is a contagious illness and is spread through the air by coughing, kissing or by touching others after touching your mouth or nose. Symptoms include marked soreness of the throat, fever, headache, stomach ache, chills, rash and enlargement of the lymph nodes in the neck. You will be treated with an antibiotic which should make you feel better within 1-2 days.

### HOME CARE:

1. Rest and drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.
2. You will no longer be contagious after 24 hours on antibiotics. Sterilize or replace your toothbrush after being on antibiotics for 2-3 days in order to avoid re-infection.
3. Take your full prescription of antibiotics even if you feel better after the first few days of treatment. Antibiotics help to reduce the severity and duration of symptoms and complications from group A strep, such as rheumatic fever and kidney disease. Taking the full prescription helps prevent the development of drug-resistant strains of bacteria.
4. For muscle aches, throat pain, and fever you may take acetaminophen or ibuprofen (avoid ibuprofen if you have a stomach ache). For older children and adults, throat lozenges or sprays or gargling with warm salt water will also reduce throat pain (dissolve  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of salt in a 5 oz. glass of warm water).
5. Contact your doctor if there is a great difficulty swallowing, drooling develops, the fever lasts for greater than 2-3 days, your urine becomes tea colored, or if the symptoms severely worsen.
6. *Note:* Scarlet fever is basically strep throat with a pinkish rash on the lower belly, groin, and armpits. It feels rough like sandpaper. This is no more harmful than strep throat without a rash.



## VIRAL PHARYNGITIS

Dear patients at Forest Hills Pediatrics:

A rapid test for Group A Strep bacteria from a swab of your throat was negative. Generally, symptoms include throat pain that is worse with swallowing, aching all over, headache, and fever. You may have cold symptoms such as a cough and stuffy nose. Your throat pain is most likely due to a viral infection. This is a contagious illness and is spread primarily through direct contact with an infected person's skin, touching a surface contaminated with a cold virus or inhaling a viral particle. The greatest preventative measure is frequent hand washing. Viral particles can survive for up to 2 hours on hands and household surfaces. Colds are transmitted from person-to-person either by direct contact or direct contact with viral particles in the environment. Colds are not caused by cold climates or being exposed to cold air. In most cases, colds do not cause serious illness. These illnesses do not require treatment with an antibiotic. In fact, treatment with an antibiotic can lead to drug resistant bacterial strains over time.

### HOME CARE:

1. Symptoms generally last for 3–7 days. Occasionally, colds can be complicated by sinusitis, pneumonia, or ear infections. Another complication arising from the common cold is worsening of asthma symptoms in patients with a history of asthma.
2. There is no specific treatment for viruses that cause pharyngitis or the common cold. You may take ibuprofen or acetaminophen for fever, muscle aches and throat pain. Runny nose and congestion may improve with the use of decongestants. In older children and adults, throat lozenges, throat sprays, or gargling with warm salt water will also reduce throat pain (dissolve  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of salt in a 5 oz. glass of warm water).

#### **ANTIBIOTICS WILL NOT HELP.**

3. Frequent hand washing and proper disposal of tissues can help decrease the spread of the viruses. Using a disinfectant that kills viruses (such as Lysol) to clean surfaces that an infected person may have touched may help decrease the spread of disease.
4. Rest and drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.
5. Contact your doctor if there is great difficulty in swallowing, opening your mouth, drooling or difficulty breathing.