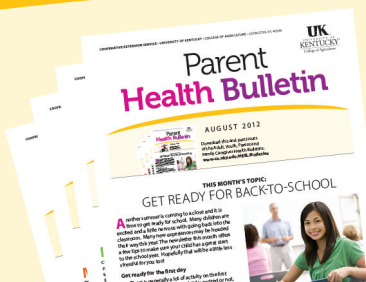


Parent Health Bulletin



JANUARY 2013

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

TAKING CARE OF A CHILD WITH STREP THROAT

During the winter months, when children are staying indoors more often, there is a greater chance for germs to spread among classmates and families. Strep throat is a common illness among children and even teens. If your child has strep throat he or she will need to go to a healthcare provider and get an antibiotic. Thankfully, with the proper medicine, rest and plenty of fluids, your child will be up and about and feeling better in just a few days.

What are the symptoms of strep throat?

There is a difference between strep throat and a sore throat. A sore throat may go with a cough or runny nose. If your child has strep throat, other symptoms usually develop in about 3 days. Things you may notice that point to strep throat are:

- Fever
- Stomach ache
- Red, swollen tonsils

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If your child has strep throat he or she will need to go to a healthcare provider and get an antibiotic.

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- White or yellow spots inside the mouth
- Difficulty swallowing
- Headache

How does strep throat spread?

The germs that cause strep throat are usually found in the nose and throat. This means that when a person who has strep throat sneezes, coughs or even shakes another person's hand, the germs can spread. It is important to remind your child to wash his or her hands often. The simple act of washing your hands can actually lower the chances of getting strep throat or other illnesses.

How does the healthcare provider treat strep throat?

Generally, most doctors or healthcare providers will prescribe 10 days of antibiotics. After 24 hours of being on antibiotics, your child should be feeling better, and probably will no longer have a fever. Even if your child is feeling better, he or she will need to finish all the antibiotics. If he or she does not finish the medicine, the infection may stay in the body.

Can you prevent the spread of strep throat in your home?

If a child has strep throat you may want to try and keep others in your home from getting sick. There are a few things that you can do to prevent the spread of germs.

- Wash all eating utensils, dishes and drinking cups separately in hot soapy water.
- Make sure your child does not share food.

Symptoms of strep throat include: fever, stomach ache, red and swollen tonsils, white or yellow spots inside the mouth, difficulty swallowing, and headache.



- Make sure your child does not share napkins or towels with other members of the family.
- Make sure your child covers his or her mouth when coughing or sneezing.

How can you help your child feel better?

It can sometimes be hard to have a sick child. To help your child feel better, provide him or her with lots of fluids, especially if there is a fever. Water and ginger ale are good choices. Warm liquids, like soups and tea, can help the throat feel better. Rest is also very important. Encourage your child to stay in bed and rest as much as possible.

Talk to your doctor to see when it is best for your child to return to work or school.

SOURCE:

Nemours KidsHealth. Strep Throat. October 2011.

Parent
Health Bulletin

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