

Strep Throat Exposure

Definition

- Close contact with someone who has a Strep throat infection
- Close contact means living in the same house with the infected person. It also includes close physical contact such as having a kissing relationship.

Health Information

Exposure (Close Contact)

- Household Close Contact. Lives with a person whose Strep test was positive. This can be a sibling, parent, or other household member.
- Kissing relationship with someone (boyfriend, girlfriend) who has a positive Strep test.
- Close contact should be within 10 days of onset of symptoms in exposed child. Reason: Time from contact to Strep symptoms usually is 2 to 5 days.

Other Types of Contact

- Limited contact with Strep. Contact with someone outside the home with a positive Strep test. This type of contact occurs at school.
- Sometimes, the contact is with someone who was treated for Strep without testing.
- Children taking antibiotics for over 12 hours and without fever do not spread Strep to others.
- Throat cultures and rapid Strep tests aren't urgent. Most can be done in your doctor's office.

Symptoms of Strep Throat

- Pain, discomfort or raw feeling of the throat
- Throat pain is made worse when swallows
- Children less than 2 years of age usually can't complain about a sore throat. A young child who does not want favorite foods may have a sore throat. They may also start to cry during feedings.
- Other symptoms include sore throat, fever, headache, stomach pain, nausea and vomiting.
- Cough, hoarseness, red eyes, and runny nose are not seen with Strep throat. These symptoms point more to a viral cause.
- Scarlet fever rash (fine, red, sandpaper-like rash) is highly suggestive of Strep throat.
- If you look at the throat with a light, it will be bright red. The tonsil will be red and swollen, often covered with pus.
- Peak age: 5 to 15 years old. Not common under 2 years old unless sibling has Strep.

Cause

- Group A Strep is the only common bacterial cause of a throat infection. (called Strep pharyngitis).
- It accounts for 20% of sore throats with fever.
- Any infection of the throat usually also involves the tonsils. (called Strep tonsillitis)

Care Advice

1. **Overview:**

- Many children have contact with someone with Strep throat.
- Most will not come down with an infection.
- This is especially true if the contact occurs outside the home.
- Strep tests are not needed for children without any symptoms.

2. **If Your Child Gets a Sore Throat:**

- It could be a Strep throat or just a viral infection of the throat.
- A sore throat is often part of a cold.
- The only way to tell is to get a Strep test.
- A Strep test is not urgent.

3. **What to Expect:**

- Time from contact to Strep symptoms usually is 2 to 5 days.
- If your child goes 7 days without getting symptoms, he won't get Strep.

4. **Return to School:**

- If your child has no symptoms, he does not need to miss any school.

Call Your Doctor If

- Your child gets any Strep symptoms in the next 7 days
- You think your child needs to be seen

Pediatric Care Advice

Author: Barton Schmitt MD, FAAP

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