



STREPTOCOCCAL INFECTION (STREP THROAT AND SCARLET FEVER) SCHOOL FACT SHEET

EXCLUSION

- Until 24 hours of antibiotics have been taken and child is fever-free. Children with no symptoms do not need to be excluded – they are at little risk of spreading disease.

CAUSE

- *Streptococcus* bacteria (Group A beta-hemolytic strep) causes both conditions.

SYMPTOMS (Strep Throat)

- Painful, red, sore throat (may have white patches on tonsils), swollen glands
- Sudden onset of fever
- Headache
- Nausea, stomach pain and vomiting may be more common in children

SYMPTOMS (Scarlet Fever)

- May be the same as those above for strep throat, with the addition of a fine, sandpaper-like rash on the neck, chest, armpit, groin area, or inner thigh

SPREAD

- Through breathing in tiny droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze
- Touching secretions of infected person and then touching your mouth or nose
- Usually not spread through casual contact like being in the same classroom.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD

- Until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins

PREVENTION OR CONTROL

- **HAND WASHING**, especially after sneezing or coughing or coming in contact with secretions from the mouth or nose.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, and dispose of used tissue promptly.

WHAT TO DO

- Consult a health care provider.
- Complete antibiotic treatment as ordered – **DO NOT** stop taking when person feels better.
- Serious complications are rare, but can occur. They include rheumatic fever (which can affect the heart if strep is untreated) and kidney disease.

References:

AAP (2006). *Red Book: 2006 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*.
Directors of Health Promotion and Education (n.d.) *Group A Streptococcus*.
Hennepin County Community Health Department (2003). *Streptococcal Infection*.
Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (2002). *Strep Throat Fact Sheet*.