

Sore throat

What causes a sore throat?

A sore throat can be caused by a virus or a bacteria. If it is caused by a virus, it is treated with pain medication, gargles, fluids, and rest. Antibiotics do not help for viral illnesses.

Strep throat is the most common bacterial cause of sore throat and needs to be treated with antibiotics. This is diagnosed by swabbing the back of the throat.

Virus	Strep
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sore throat• bloodshot eyes• hoarseness• swollen glands	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sore throat• fever• upset stomach• vomiting (throwing up)• stomach pain• headache• swollen glands• body rash starting in the groin

How should I care for my child?

Give extra (mild) liquids to moisten the throat. Avoid citrus or spicy drinks that could hurt. Warm tea with honey and lemon can help ease discomfort.

Increase the humidity of your child's room by using a cool mist vaporizer. Be sure to clean it daily with bleach or Lysol® to kill molds and germs.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol® or another brand) or ibuprofen (Motrin® or another brand) helps to reduce fever and relieve pain. See the dosage chart on the back of this sheet.

Depending on children's ages, they may be able to gargle with mild salt water (¼ teaspoon salt in ½ cup of warm water).

Do not give hard candy or cough drops to children younger than 4 years old because they are at risk for choking.

What else do I need to know?

A rapid strep test and a 24-hour culture may be done to see if strep is present. To get the results, follow the checked directions:

- Call _____
in 1 hour (for rapid strep test).
- Call _____
at _____ (time) on _____ (date).
- _____
will call you.

Please have the name and telephone number of your pharmacy and any **drug allergy** information ready, so a prescription can be called to the pharmacy.

After 1 or 2 days the antibiotic will start to have an effect and your child might feel much better. **Don't stop the medicine!** Be sure to give the antibiotic until it is gone to be sure all the germs are killed.

Strep throat can have **serious** long-term effects, such as heart damage or kidney damage if it is left untreated.

After 24 hours of taking the antibiotic, children can return to school or day care, **if the fever is gone and they feel better.** You may want to check the policy of your child's school or day care for other guidelines.

When should I call the clinic?

- refusing to drink
- not much better after 3 days
- questions about the throat culture results
- rash or itching after starting antibiotics
- fever or sore throat returns after the antibiotic is done
- earache (pulling on the ears)
- fever higher than 105° F (40.5° C)
- stiff neck
- drooling (unable to swallow)
- signs of dehydration:
 - dry, sticky mouth
 - no tears when crying
 - no urine in over 8 hours
- trouble breathing - **call 911**

How much medicine should I give?

The medicines below can be given to increase comfort and reduce fever. Check with your doctor about which to use. Give the amount based on **weight** if possible. If you do not have a scale, give the amount based on age. **Note:** 1 teaspoon = 5 ml. Measure with a measuring spoon or dosage device.

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any questions, please call your clinic.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol® or another brand)

Give every 4 to 6 hours as needed. (Also available in suppositories; use the same number of mg.)

Weight pounds (lbs.)	Age	Drops 1 dropperful=80 mg (0.8 ml)	Elixir 1 teaspoon=160 mg	Chewable 1 tablet=80 mg	Jr. strength 1 caplet=160 mg	Reg. strength 1 tablet=325mg
6-11 lbs.	0-3 months	½ dropper (0.4 ml)	-----	-----	-----	
12-17 lbs.	4-11 months	1 dropper (0.8 ml)	½ teaspoon	-----	-----	
18-23 lbs.	12-23 months	1½ droppers (1.2 ml)	¾ teaspoon	-----	-----	
24-35 lbs.	2-3 years	2 droppers (1.6 ml)	1 teaspoon	2 tablets	-----	
36-47 lbs.	4-5 years	-----	1½ teaspoons	3 tablets	-----	
48-59 lbs.	6-8 years		2 teaspoons	4 tablets	2 caplets	1 tablet
60-71 lbs.	9-10 years	-----	2½ teaspoons	5 tablets	2½ caplets	1 tablet
72-95 lbs.	11 years	-----	3 teaspoons	6 tablets	3 caplets	1½ tablets
96+ lbs.	12-14 years	-----	-----	-----	4 caplets	2 tablets

Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, or another brand)

Give every 6 to 8 hours as needed; **always** with food. Other strengths available by prescription.

Weight pounds (lbs)	Age	Dose	Liquid 1 teaspoon = 100 mg	Chewable tablets 1 tablet = 100 mg	Tablets 1 tablet = 200 mg
11-21 lbs.	6-12 months	50 mg	½ teaspoon	½ tablet	
22-32 lbs.	1-2 years	100 mg	1 teaspoon	1 tablet	
33-43 lbs.	3-5 years	150 mg	1½ teaspoons	1 ½ tablets	
44-54 lbs.	6-8 years	200 mg	2 teaspoons	2 tablets	1 tablet
55-65 lbs.	9-10 years	250 mg	2½ teaspoons	2 ½ tablets	
66-87 lbs.	11 years	300 mg	3 teaspoons	3 tablets	1½ tablets
88+ lbs.	12 and older	400 mg	4 teaspoons	4 tablets	2 tablets