

ACUTE PHARYNGITIS

SORE THROAT

- Most cases of acute pharyngitis (i.e. sore throat) are caused by VIRUSES.
- The most common symptoms of a VIRAL sore throat are cough, runny nose, congestion, fever, hoarse voice, pink eye, rash, and diarrhea.
- VIRAL sore throats cannot be treated with antibiotics.

STREP THROAT

- Group A Streptococcus (GAS) is the most common cause of bacterial pharyngitis.
- STREP throat typically occurs in school-aged children.
- STREP throat can occur anytime of year, but typically peaks during winter and early spring.
- The most common symptoms of STREP throat have abrupt onset and include fever, sore throat, headache, stomach ache, vomiting, pus on the tonsils, and rash.
- STREP throat does NOT cause typical viral symptoms such as cough, runny nose, congestion, pink eye.

TESTING

- STREP throat cannot be diagnosed using history and physical findings. A test must be completed to confirm the diagnosis.
- It is important to identify STREP throat in order to decrease the use of unnecessary antibiotics, the duration and severity of illness, complications, and transmission.
- Some children carry the STREP bacteria on their throat naturally, and it does NOT cause illness.
- If your child has significant viral symptoms (see above), a test will most likely NOT be completed.
- If your child has classic STREP symptoms (see above), a test WILL most likely be completed.
- If your child is less than 3 years old, a test will most likely NOT be completed, as STREP throat is rare in that age group.

TREATMENT

- Treatment recommendations will vary based on the sore throat cause, symptoms, and age of your child.
- VIRAL sore throats are treated symptomatically: rest, fluids, pain control, and/or mouth rinses.
- STREP throat is treated with an antibiotic and symptomatic care as listed above.
- All strep bacteria causing STREP throat are treated by Amoxicillin. That is, there is NO resistance.
- If your child is allergic to Amoxicillin, a different antibiotic will be chosen.
- If your child has STREP throat, they may return to daycare/school 18-24 hours after starting the antibiotic.
- If your child has a VIRAL sore throat, they may return to daycare/school 24 hours after fevers have resolved (if any.)