

# Strep throat

## Description

Strep throat, also called streptococcal throat, is an infection of the throat and tonsils caused by streptococcal bacteria. Left untreated it can lead to rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease

## How does it spread?

It is spread by close contact, often by breathing in droplets from an infected person's coughs and sneezes. It can also be spread through shared food or drinks. (Health Navigator)

## Exclusion period

Exclude until well and/or until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours.

## Symptoms

- Sore throat
- Pain when swallowing
- Chills and fever
- Swollen and tender glands (lymph nodes) on the sides of the neck
- Red and swollen appearance inside the throat
- Pus-like white or yellow patches or spots may be visible on the back of the throat and on the tonsils
- Headache, nausea and vomiting may also be present
- Earache
- Body aches and pains.



Image: <https://www.healthline.com/health/strep-throat>

## Responsibilities of Early Childhood Education Service

- Recommend to parents that they take child to a GP or their family doctor
- Encourage regular handwashing and drying of hands
- Prevent the sharing of food, drink, eating utensils, or toys that may be put in the mouth
- Encourage and support children to cover mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing
- Administer antibiotics if requested by parents (after 24 hours worth has been given at home), as per the centre's medication policy.

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## Responsibilities of parents

- Take child to GP – every sore throat should be assessed.
- Keep child home until they are feeling well enough to participate in normal centre activities.
- If prescribed antibiotics keep the child at home until 24 hours of antibiotics have been taken.
- If having problems getting the child to take medication please discuss with GP. It is very important the full course of antibiotics is completed.

## Treatment

- As per the GP's recommendation
- If antibiotics are prescribed, complete the full course unless advised otherwise by the GP
- Antibiotic course is generally 10 days.

## Complications

Potential complications of untreated strep throat infection include rheumatic fever, middle ear infection (otitis media), sinus infection (sinusitis), pneumonia, meningitis and kidney disease.

## Links/references

- <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/conditions-and-treatments/diseases-and-illnesses/rheumatic-fever>
- <https://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/health-a-z/s/strep-throat/>
- <https://www.hpa.org.nz/sites/default/files/documents/RF%20family%20guide.pdf>
- <https://www.southerncross.co.nz/group/medical-library/strep-throat-causes-symptoms-treatment>
- <https://www.healthline.com/health/strep-throat#symptoms>