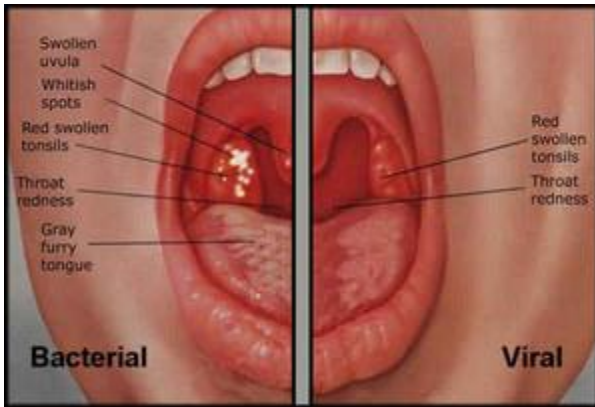


## Is It Strep Throat?



It's that time of year when coughs and sore throats are pretty common. They have a variety of causes, from the dry winter air, to allergies, to viruses and bacteria. While many sore throats heal without treatment, some throat infections, such as strep throat, may need antibiotic treatment.

### How do you get Strep Throat?

Strep is caused by a bacteria called group A Streptococcus bacteria. This bacteria can live in a person's nose and throat. They are spread by touching droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze. It can also be transmitted by sharing the same drinking glass. Symptoms usually occur 2-4 days after coming in contact with the bacteria.

### What are the symptoms of Strep Throat?

- A sore throat that comes on quickly
- Severe pain when swallowing
- A fever over 101 degrees F
- Red and swollen tonsils, sometimes with white patches or streaks of pus
- Tiny red spots on the towards the back of the roof of your mouth
- Headache
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Body aches
- Rash

### How is it diagnosed and treated?

A step test (a quick swab of the throat) at the doctor's office can quickly show if your child has strep throat. The test is necessary; the diagnosis cannot be made just by looking in the back of the throat.

If the test is positive, the doctor will prescribe antibiotics for treatment.

People diagnosed with strep throat usually start feeling better within a day

or two. Home remedies include salt-water gargles, honey or lemon in tea, and taking Tylenol or ibuprofen to help with the throat pain and fever.

### **When can my child return to school?**

Your child may return to school 24 hours after the antibiotic has been started and in accordance with your doctor's orders.

### **How can I prevent my child from getting strep throat?**

**The best way to prevent strep throat, and other illnesses, is to wash your hands often! Also, avoid sharing eating utensils, such as cups and forks. It is especially important for anyone with a sore throat to cover their mouth with their elbow when they cough or sneeze.**