
Treating Sore Throats

Most sore throats are due to viral infections. A child with a cold or the flu often has a sore throat as one of his/her symptoms. Swollen, red tonsils, called tonsillitis, often develop with a sore throat.

A sore throat can also be a symptom of a bacterial infection such as strep throat. Breathing in irritants like pollen, smoke or dust can cause sore throats as well. Sore throats from viruses usually last several days.

Often times, a throat swab is necessary in order to determine if your child has strep throat or a viral illness. Since this sometimes gags children, it might help to hold your child on your lap while it's being done.

There are several things you can do to help relieve your child's sore throat symptoms:

- Give non-aspirin children's analgesic such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) as prescribed. To avoid the development of Reye's Syndrome, a life threatening illness, do not give aspirin products to children under 19 years of age.
- Encourage soothing liquids such as water, juice, popsicles, or soup.
- Use a cool mist vaporizer or warm foggy air in a steamy bathroom.
- Make a warm salt water gargle of 1 tsp. salt per 8 oz. of water. Do not let your child swallow the salt solution.
- Sucking on hard candy may be helpful to children older than 5

Your child needs IMMEDIATE attention if:

- He or she is drooling or has great difficulty swallowing.
- Has difficulty breathing
- Looks very sick.

Call us if your child has a sore throat and there is:

- Fever greater than 101 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Severe throat pain.
- A sore throat lasting more than 2 days.
- Swollen or painful glands in his neck, abdominal pain, or a rash.