

STREP THROAT

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STREP THROAT

'Strep throat' is an infection caused by a particular strain of streptococcus bacteria. Your health care provider may recommend a throat culture if your sore throat is not associated with cold symptoms or if it is associated with fever, swollen glands (lymph nodes in the front of your neck), or white patches on the back of your throat. **A throat culture will test positive if you have strep.**

There are two types of throat cultures that may be done. A Quick Strep test can be done immediately with results obtained within 10 minutes. Another type of throat culture that may be ordered is sent to the laboratory. This culture takes 2-3 days to obtain the results.

Strep throat is generally treated with penicillin or another antibiotic. When an antibiotic is prescribed, it should be taken – as your physician directs – for the full course (usually 10 days). Otherwise the infection will probably be suppressed rather than eliminated and it can return. A strep infection can cause damage to the heart valves (rheumatic fever) and kidneys (nephritis). Streptococcal infections can also cause scarlet fever, tonsillitis, pneumonia, sinusitis and ear infections.

WHEN YOU SHOULD SEEK MEDICAL CARE

If you have:

- Been in contact with someone with strep throat, it is reasonable to have a throat culture done.
- Severe and prolonged sore throat lasting longer than a week that is not associated with an allergy or irritation.
- Difficulty breathing.
- Difficulty swallowing liquids
- Difficulty opening your mouth.
- Joint pains
- Earache
- Rash
- Fever over 101° F.
- Frequently recurring sore throat
- Lump in the neck
- Hoarseness lasting over 2 weeks

Northern Oklahoma College works closely with local and state health officials to monitor and educate students, faculty and staff concerning health-related issues. We are committed to keeping students, faculty and staff safe, healthy and informed. The information provided below is intended to be informative and raise awareness.

TREATING YOUR SORE THROAT

- **Increase your liquid intake.** Warm broth and soup are very good for sore throats. Drink more water and juices. Warm tea with honey is a favorite home-remedy.
- **Add some moisture to your living area.** Use a humidifier in your bedroom. Even a large bowl of water or a wet towel hung up in your room will help.
- **Gargle with warm salt water** several times daily: add ½ teaspoon salt to ½ glass of warm water.
- **Take mild-over-the-counter pain relievers.**
- **You may use non-prescription throat lozenges or sore-throat spray** for temporary relief.
- **An ice pack applied to your neck** for 20 minutes several times daily can also help reduce pain.
- **Return to your medical care provider if your symptoms become worse.**

This information is not intended as a substitute for medical advice of physicians. The reader should regularly consult a physician in matters relating to his or her health and particularly with respect to any symptoms that may require diagnosis or medical attention. .