

STREPTOCOCCAL SORE THROAT AND SCARLET FEVER

IMMUNIZATION: None

INCUBATION PERIOD: Short, usually ranging 1 to 3 days.

SYMPTOMS: Streptococcal sore throat is scarlet fever infection without a rash. All symptoms are the same except the rash and peeling do not occur. Sudden onset, with sore throat, fever, tonsillitis or pharyngitis, and tender lymph glands in the neck. Rash, if it appears, usually does so within 24 hours upon neck, chest and in the folds of the axilla, elbows and groin. It appears as a fine, pinpoint rash which can be felt (like sandpaper). The face is flushed, with paleness around the mouth. The red papillae of the tongue may show through white coating ("strawberry tongue").

PERIOD OF COMMUNICABILITY:

In untreated, uncomplicated cases, 10-21 days; in untreated persons with purulent discharges, weeks or months; with adequate antibiotic therapy, generally no more than 24 hours from start of therapy.

MODE OF TRANSMISSION:

Mainly contact with respiratory droplets of infected person or carrier. Rarely per casual contact.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:

Children should not return to school until at least 24 hours after beginning antibiotic treatment, and until they are afebrile. Stress importance of need to complete prescribed treatment.

CONTACTS/FOLLOW-UP:

Symptomatic contacts should be cultured to assure adequate antibiotic treatment if culture is positive for strep.