



### What is Strep Throat? Scarlet Fever?

Strep throat is a sore throat caused by group A streptococcal bacteria. A healthcare provider can diagnose and treat strep throat. Treatment usually includes antibiotics. Strep throat can occur at any age, but is most common in school-age children. Strep Throat can occur year round, but peaks in late winter and early spring.

Scarlet fever is also caused by streptococcal bacteria and is characterized by a skin rash, usually in children under 18 years of age. A fine red rash appears most often on the neck, chest, abdomen, under arms, elbows, groin, and on the inner surfaces of the thighs. The rash feels like sandpaper. In addition to the rash, a person with scarlet fever may have the same symptoms as strep throat.

### How is Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever spread?

When an infected person talks, coughs or sneezes, they can spread the infection through respiratory droplets. It can also be spread by direct contact with nose or throat secretions of an infected person by kissing, sharing drinking glasses, water bottles, or eating utensils.

### How is Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever treated?

A throat culture or rapid strep test is needed to accurately diagnose strep throat. Strep throat and scarlet fever are treated with antibiotics. It is very important to complete antibiotic therapy as ordered by your doctor. Untreated or inadequately treated streptococcal infections can lead to serious complications such as kidney disease, rheumatic fever, or throat abscesses. Adequate hydration and rest are also important.

### How can Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever be prevented?

- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly.
- Wash hands after using a tissue for a cough

or sneeze.

- In a school setting, children with strep throat should be excluded until 12 hours after antibiotics have been started (2+ doses).
- Cough or sneeze into tissue. Dispose of tissues properly.

### Symptoms of Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever:

- Sudden onset of fever
- Sore throat with reddened, white or yellow (tonsil area)
- Painful swallowing
- Swollen and tender lymph nodes whitish coating on tongue
- Ear pain
- Skin rash in the presence of the above symptoms may indicate scarlet fever

Jackson County Health Department  
Communicable Disease Dept.  
1715 Lansing Ave.  
Jackson, MI 49202  
(517) 788-4655

[www.mijackson.org](http://www.mijackson.org)

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[TTY 888-232-6348](tel:8882326348)