

ALLEGAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Office Administration

(269) 673-5411

Bioterrorism Preparedness

(269) 686-4570

Personal Health

(269) 673-5413



Communicable Disease

(269) 686-4551

Environmental Health

(269) 673-5415

Resource Recovery

(269) 673-5415

STREP THROAT

(Streptococcal Pharyngitis/Sore Throat)

What is strep throat?

Strep throat is a contagious infection of the throat and tonsils caused by streptococcal bacteria. It can occur at any age, but is most prevalent among school-aged children.

How is it spread?

It is spread from person-to-person mainly by direct contact with infectious droplets from the upper respiratory tract of an infected person and/or carrier.

What is the incubation period?

From 1-7 day after contact (the average is 2-5 days) for symptoms to appear.

What are the early signs?

Sudden onset of fever; sore, reddened throat; and enlarged lymph nodes in the neck.

What about contacts?

Children who show signs of strep throat should be sent home and seen by a physician for proper treatment.

How long is the person contagious?

Strep throat is most contagious during the active infection, but is no longer contagious 24 hours after antibiotic treatment is started. Untreated strep throat may be contagious for several weeks.

When is it OK to return to school?

Children should not return to school until at least 24 hours after beginning antibiotic treatment, and the fever is gone.

Other Important Information

- The most important way of controlling strep throat and its complications is prompt identification and treatment of infections.
- Children may pass the infection on to others.
- At the first sign of illness:
 1. Call your family doctor for instructions.
 2. Notify the school your child is ill.

This fact sheet is not intended to replace the advice of your physician. Parents should contact their healthcare provider if they have concerns regarding their child's health. If you have general questions, you may contact an Allegan County nurse at 269-686-4551.