

SORE THROAT

Sore throat is a very common symptom in children. As with vomiting and diarrhea, most sore throats are caused by viruses, which do not respond to antibiotics. Everyone worries about whether their child has a “strep throat”. This type of sore throat is caused by a particular type of bacteria.

If your child has a sore throat, we will usually obtain a throat swab and run a test for strep in the office. Results are available within 10 minutes. We do an overnight culture as a back-up for all negative strep tests. If the culture is negative (no strep bacteria), then no antibiotic is needed to improve your child’s symptoms. Even if the culture does not show strep, beginning him/her on a course of antibiotics will not speed his/her recovery. Please remember that antibiotics do not “cure” sore throat and there is always the possibility of a serious allergic reaction when an antibiotic is prescribed. We, therefore, do not prescribe such medications unless they are indicated.

Minor sore throats associated with hoarseness or with cold symptoms are generally of no great concern and resolve without treatment. However, if your child has a sore throat associated with fever for 48 hours, we suggest you call the office during regular office hours.