Scarlet Fever

You or your child has scarlet fever. This illness is caused by Strep bacteria. It usually begins with a rash on the face and trunk which spreads to the rest of the body over 1 day. The rash is red and very fine. Fever, weakness, and a sore throat usually start 1-2 days before the rash appears. The rash lasts about 5 days, and the skin may peel in 1-2 weeks.

Scarlet fever is treated with an antibiotic for 10 days to get rid of the Strep bacteria. The sore throat and fever are usually better in 1-2 days. You are no longer contagious after 1 day on antibiotics. Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver. Be sure to encourage plenty of cool liquids. Other family members should be checked if they have a similar rash, fever, sore throat or headache. **Call your doctor or go to the emergency room right away if you or your child has the following symptoms:**

- **Excessive drooling and difficulty swallowing or breathing problems.**
- **A high fever or one that lasts more than 3 days.**
- **Signs of dehydration (weakness, poor urine flow, fainting).**
- **Dark tea-colored or smoky appearing urine.**
- **Pain, redness, or swelling around joints.**

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