Strep Infections

Streptococcal (strep) infections are caused by streptococcal germs (*bacteria*). Strep infections are very contagious. Strep infections can occur in:

- Ears.
- The nose.
- The throat.
- Sinuses.
- Skin.
- Blood.
- Lungs.
- Spinal fluid.
- Urine.

Strep throat is the most common bacterial infection in children. The symptoms of a Strep infection usually get better in 2 to 3 days after starting medicine that kills germs (*antibiotics*). Strep is usually not contagious after 36 to 48 hours of antibiotic treatment. Strep infections that are not treated can cause serious complications. These include gland infections, throat abscess, rheumatic fever and kidney disease.

DIAGNOSIS

The diagnosis of strep is made by:

- A culture for the strep germ.

TREATMENT

These infections require oral antibiotics for a full 10 days, an antibiotic shot or antibiotics given into the vein (*intravenous, IV*).

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Be sure to finish all antibiotics even if feeling better.
- Only take over-the-counter medicines for pain, discomfort and or fever, as directed by your caregiver.
- Close contacts that have a fever, sore throat or illness symptoms should see their caregiver right away.
- You or your child may return to work, school or daycare if the fever and pain are better in 2 to 3 days after starting antibiotics.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You or your child have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 100.5º F (38.1° C) or higher for more than 1 day.
- You or your child is not better in 3 days.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You or your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**
- There is a spreading rash.
- There is difficulty swallowing or breathing.
- There is increased pain or swelling.

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