# Cat Scratch Disease

You may have a bacterial infection called cat scratch disease (CSD). CSD usually follows a minor skin scratch or bite from a baby or adult cat, and causes a reddened sore or bump with or without some pus at the site of injury. This sore may take weeks to go away. One or a couple swollen lymph glands near the sore or towards the center of the body are also frequently present. Other Symptoms may include:

- Fever.
- Headache.
- Fatigue.

The diagnosis is usually based on a history of exposure to cats and the typical skin and lymph gland findings. A blood test to demonstrate exposure to the bacteria that causes CSD is occasionally ordered to confirm the diagnosis. Obtaining liquid or pus from a swollen lymph gland is sometimes done to assure an absence of other infections that may cause a similar sore and gland enlargement.

Symptoms usually get better without treatment. Complications are rare. Antibiotic medicine may be prescribed and may be helpful for very severe infections. Keeping kittens and cats indoors and not playing roughly with them will help reduce the risk of getting cat scratch disease.

**SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOU DEVELOP:**

- A severe headache.
- A high fever.
- Repeated vomiting.
- Unusual sleepiness.
- Progressive or very painful swelling in a lymph gland.

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