Sore Throat

Sore throats may be caused by bacteria and viruses. They may also be caused by:
- Smoking.
- Pollution.
- Allergies.

If a sore throat is due to Strep infection (a bacterial infection), you may need:
- A throat swab and/or
- A culture test to verify the strep infection.

You will need one of these:
- An antibiotic shot.
- Oral medicine for a full 10 days to cure it.

Strep infection is very contagious. A doctor should check any close contacts who have a sore throat or fever. A sore throat caused by a virus infection will usually last only 3-4 days. Antibiotics will not treat a viral sore throat.

Infectious mononucleosis (a viral disease), however, can cause a sore throat that last for up to 3 weeks. Mononucleosis can be diagnosed with blood tests. You must have been sick for at least 1 week for the test to give accurate results.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS
- To treat a sore throat, take mild pain medicine.
- Increase your fluids.
- Eat a soft diet.
- Do not smoke.
- Gargling with warm water or salt water (1 tsp. salt in 8 oz. water) can be helpful.
- Try throat sprays or lozenges or sucking on hard candy will also ease the symptoms.

Call your doctor if your sore throat lasts longer than 1 week.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOU HAVE:
- Breathing difficulty.
- Increased swelling in the throat.
- Pain so severe you are unable to swallow fluids or your saliva.
- A severe headache, high fever, vomiting, or red rash.

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