



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

FACT SHEET STREP THROAT / SCARLET FEVER

(*Streptococcal* Pharyngitis/Sore Throat)

What is Strep throat?	Strep throat is a contagious infection of the throat and tonsils caused by streptococcal bacteria. Scarlet fever is when a rash develops with the infection. It can occur at any age, but is most common among school-aged children.
How is it spread?	It is spread from person-to-person mainly by direct contact with infectious droplets from the upper respiratory tract of an infected person and/or carrier. This means that a person who has strep throat/scarlet fever can give the infection to someone else when they cough or sneeze.
What is the incubation period?	Symptoms usually appear 1-7 day after contact (the average is 2-5 days).
What are the early signs?	Sudden fever; sore, reddened throat; and enlarged lymph nodes in the neck. Scarlet fever can cause "strawberry" red tongue, and possibly vomiting and headache. A fine, pinkish-red, sandpaper-like rash often appears on the neck, chest, under arms, inner elbows, and groin area.
What about contacts?	Children who show signs of strep throat/scarlet fever should be sent home and seen by a doctor for proper treatment.
How long is the person contagious?	Strep throat/scarlet fever is most easily spread while having symptoms, but is no longer contagious 12 hours after antibiotic treatment is started. Untreated strep throat may be contagious for several weeks.
When is it OK to return to daycare/school?	Children should not return until the fever is gone and at least 12 hours after beginning antibiotic treatment.
Other Important Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The most important way of controlling strep throat / scarlet fever and complications is quick identification and treatment of infections.• Children may pass the infection on to others.• At the first sign of illness:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Call your family doctor for instructions.2. Notify the school your child is ill.

This fact sheet is not intended to replace the advice of your physician. Parents should contact their healthcare provider if they have concerns regarding their child's health. If you have general questions, you may contact a Kalamazoo County nurse at 373-5022 or 373-5267.

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HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

311 E. Alcott St. | Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Phone: 269.373.5200 | www.kalcounty.com/hcs