

# Pharyngitis (Sore Throat)

## What is it?

Pharyngitis is a sore throat, caused by inflammation from bacteria, fungus, virus, parasite and/or cigarette smoke. Most commonly, pharyngitis is caused by a virus or bacteria, which are easily spread from person to person, so most sore throats occur during the cold winter months, because people spend much of their time indoors in close contact with others.

## Symptoms

Pharyngitis can manifest itself in a variety of ways from patient to patient, but most often they include a combination of the following:

- ✓ Irritated, sore, scratchy throat
- ✓ Difficulty or painful swallowing
- ✓ Low-grade fever
- ✓ Redness, drainage and swelling in the throat
- ✓ Loss or decrease of appetite and/or nausea

## Diagnosis

Because pharyngitis has so many causes, it is important to see your physician for a diagnosis, so he or she can recommend a, effective treatment plan. To diagnose the cause of the pharyngitis, your physician may perform a combination of the following examinations and tests:

- ✓ A physical examination
- ✓ A throat swab, to check for GABHS (strep throat)

## Treatments

Your (or your child's) treatment plan will vary depending on the cause of the pharyngitis, but will often include a combination of the following:

- ✓ If the cause of the pharyngitis is GABHS or another bacteria, a round of antibiotics will be prescribed. If the cause is viral, your physician will **NOT** prescribe antibiotics, since they will not help, and may greatly lessen the effects of antibiotics if they're required for another infection or illness later.
- ✓ Acetaminophen, increased fluids and/or throat lozenges, to ease pain and irritation.

If your symptoms worsen, or do not recede after the full course of antibiotics has been used, please consult your physician again.



## Helpful Hints

- ✓ **NEVER** give a aspirin to a child with a fever, as this may cause Reyes syndrome.
- ✓ **An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!** To avoid getting sick, wash your hands thoroughly and often, and teach your children to do the same.

### Brought to you by the caring physicians at:

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