

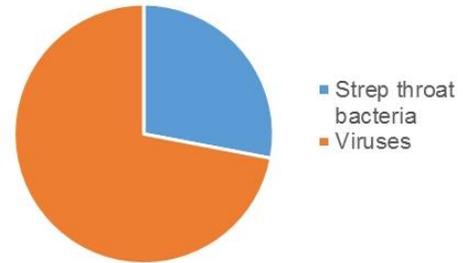
Testing for Strep Throat Bacteria

Viruses cause most sore throats

- Children have many viral respiratory illnesses (colds) each year, which can cause fevers, coughs, runny nose, and sore throat.
- Antibiotics **DO NOT** treat viral infections; they only treat bacteria.

When would my child be tested for strep throat?

- Your child may be tested if they have the following symptoms:
 - Sore throat
 - Trouble swallowing
 - Fever
 - Headache
 - Swollen glands in the neck



Why do we **NOT** test every child with a sore throat for Strep?

- Your child does **NOT** need testing for strep throat if they have a noticeable cough, runny nose, hoarseness, red eyes, or diarrhea because these symptoms suggest a virus.
- Testing for strep throat is usually **NOT** needed for children younger than 3 years old because strep throat is uncommon in very young children.
- Some children carry strep bacteria in their throat but are not sick from it. These children do not need testing or treatment.

Will my child need to take an antibiotic?

- Unnecessary antibiotics can be harmful; only children with a positive test for strep throat should receive antibiotics.
- Amoxicillin and penicillin are the recommended antibiotics for strep throat.

Call your doctor if your child:

- Is not better by 3 days.
- Has trouble breathing or swallowing.
- Starts drooling.
- Develops a rash after starting an antibiotic.

If you have any questions from today's visit, please ask!

KidsHealth handout is available from Scope or CMKC external website:

[Strep Throat \(for Kids\) — Print Version - Children's Mercy Hospital \(kidshealth.org\)](#)