

Sore Throat

A sore throat is an inflamed or irritated throat. Signs include pain when you swallow, fever and swollen glands in the neck.

Causes

A sore throat may be caused by:

- Viral infections such as a cold or flu that often last 5-7 days. There is no antibiotic that can treat a virus.
- Bacterial infections such as strep throat that can be treated with antibiotics.
- Smoking.
- Shouting or voice strain.
- Allergies.
- Breathing fumes.

Your Care

A throat culture may be done. If you have a bacterial infection, an antibiotic will be ordered. Take all of the pills until they are gone. Do not stop taking them when you feel better.

Other things that may help you feel better:

- Gargle with warm salt water. Mix ¼ teaspoon of salt in 1 cup of water.
- Use throat lozenges or sprays for sore throats.
- Use cough medicine.
- Avoid smoking, alcohol, coffee, and hot or spicy food.
- Follow-up with your doctor as directed.

Call your doctor **right away** if you:

- Have trouble breathing
- Have a fever over 101 degrees F or 38 degrees C
- Get a rash
- Do not feel better in 5 days
- Have swelling inside your mouth
- Are not able to open your mouth

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.