

The diagnosis will require examination by a physician with special training in diseases of the ears, nose, throat, head and neck. Special mirrors or telescopic instruments will be used to see the suspicious areas of the throat.

How Can I Treat My Own Sore Throat ?

A mild sore throat associated with "cold" or "flu" symptoms can be made more comfortable with the following remedies.

- Increase your liquid intake. (Warm tea with honey is a favorite home remedy).
- Use a steamer or humidifier in your bedroom.
- Gargle with warm salt water several times daily: 1/4 tsp salt to 1/2 cup water.
- Take throat lozenges.

When Should I See a Doctor ?

Whenever a sore throat is severe, persists longer than the usual five to seven day duration of a "cold" or "flu" and is not associated with an avoidable allergy or irritation, you should seek medical attention. The following signs and symptoms should alert you to see your physician.

- Severe and prolonged sore throat
- Difficulty breathing
- Difficulty swallowing
- Difficulty opening the mouth
- Joint pains
- Earache
- Rash
- Fever (Over 100°)
- Blood in saliva or phlegm
- Frequently recurring sore throat
- Lump in the neck
- Hoarseness lasting over 2 weeks

When Should I Take Antibiotics ?

Antibiotics are drugs that kill or impair bacteria. Penicillin or erythromycin (well-known antibiotics) are prescribed when the physician

suspects streptococcal or other bacterial infection that will respond to them. However, a number of bacterial throat infections do not cure viral infections, but viruses do lower the patient's resistance to bacterial infections. When such a combined infection occurs, antibiotics may become necessary.

When an antibiotic is prescribed, it should be taken - as the physician directs - for the full course. Otherwise the infection will probably be suppressed rather than eliminated, and it can return.

What If My Throat Culture Is Negative?

A "strep" culture tests only for presence of streptococcal infections. Many other infections, both bacterial and viral, will yield negative cultures and sometimes so does a streptococcal infection. Therefore, when your culture is negative, your physician will base his decision for treatment on the severity of your symptoms and the appearance of your throat on examination. Do not discontinue your medications unless your physician instructs you to do so.

Should Other Family Members Be Treated? or Cultured ?

When "strep" throat is proven by test or culture, many experts recommend treatment of other family members, because streptococcal infections are so highly contagious. Others recommend treating only the family members with sore throats and culturing the others. So be sure you tell your physician how other family members are feeling. Practice good sanitary habits; avoid close physical contact and sharing of napkins, towels and utensils with the infected persons. Handwashing makes good sense.

The advice in this pamphlet is for general information. But remember, the best advice for your specific case is what you get from your physician who hears your symptoms and examines your throat.

Dr. D.S. DEENADAYAL, MS, D.D.O

Specialist in Ear, Nose and Throat Diseases &

Head and Neck Surgery

FOR APPOINTMENTS CALL : 771 2700

Between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. on Weekdays

A ARTI CLINIC

CENTRE FOR MICRO SURGERY
ENDOSCOPIC SURGERY, COSMETIC
SURGERY AND HEAD AND NECK SURGERY



Sore Throats

Causes & Cures



9-1-193, St. Mary's Road,
(Opp. Prashant Theatre)
Secunderabad - 500 003. A.P.
040-7712700 Fax : 040-7704460

SORE THROATS - CAUSES AND CURES

What Causes a Sore Throat ?

Everyone experience a sore throat now and then. A raw painful throat can make swallowing difficult and interfere with daily life.

Sore throat is one symptom of an array of different medical disorders. Infections cause the majority of sore throats, and these are the sore throats that are contagious (can be passed from one person to another). Infections can be caused by either viruses or bacteria. The most important difference between viruses and bacteria is that bacteria respond well to antibiotic treatment, but viruses do not.

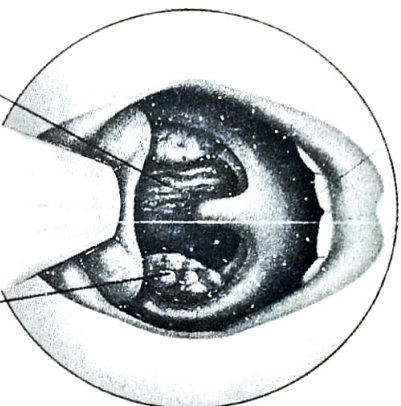
There are many kinds of sore throats. Those associated with an upper respiratory infection, such as a cold, are called acute. Those associated with long-term problems and that return regularly - such as allergies, poor nasal function, and acid reflux - are called chronic. **Pharyngitis** and **Tonsillitis** are the two most common types of sore throats. Pharyngitis involves the pharynx (the back of the throat) while tonsillitis is confined to the tonsils on either side of the pharynx.

Medical treatment is recommended whenever a sore throat is severe or recurs regularly. A thorough medical exam can help establish whether your sore throat is acute or chronic, and what's causing it.

Tonsillitis : Tonsillitis is an inflammation of the tonsils on both sides of the back of the pharynx caused by a viral or bacterial infection. Acute tonsillitis may follow an upper respiratory infection whereas chronic tonsillitis is a recurring problem. Both forms can be painful. A recent study has shown that children who suffer from frequently recurrent episodes of tonsillitis (such as 3-4 episodes each year) were healthier after their tonsils were surgically removed.

Pharyngitis : Pharyngitis means inflammation of the pharynx. Acute pharyngitis can be very painful but generally lasts only a few days. It is most often caused by a viral infection, for which antibiotics are ineffective. Medication may help reduce pain and relieve a runny nose, watery

eyes, and itching. Chronic pharyngitis is generally due to allergies, nasal obstructions that cause "dry throat" or acid reflux; antibiotics are not commonly prescribed.



The pharynx is red, inflamed and sore. Tonsils may or may not be affected.

The tonsils on either side of the upper pharynx are inflamed; bacteria are usually present.

Viruses : Most viral sore throats accompany the "flu" or a "cold". When a stuffy-runny nose, sneezing, and generalised aches and pains accompany the sore throat, it is probably caused by one of the hundred of known viruses. These are highly contagious. The body cures itself of a viral infection by building antibodies that destroy the virus, a process that takes about a week. Sore throats accompany other viral infections such as measles, chickenpox, whooping cough, and croup canker sores and fever blisters in the throat also can be very painful.

Bacteria : "Strep throat" is an infection caused by a particular strain of streptococcus bacteria. This infection can also cause damage to the heart valves (rheumatic fever) and kidneys (nephritis). Streptococcal infections can also cause scarlet fever, tonsillitis, pneumonia, sinusitis and ear infections. Because of these possible complications, a "strep throat" should be treated with an antibiotic. "Strep" infections usually cause a longer lasting sore throat than a "cold" or the "flu". But "strep" is not always easy to detect by examination, and a throat culture may be needed.

Allergy : Hayfever and allergy sufferers can get an irritated throat during an allergy attack the same way they get a stuffy, itchy nose, sneezing and post nasal drip. The same pollens and molds that irritate the nose when they are inhaled may also irritate the throat.

Irritation : During the cold winter months, dry heat may create a recurring, mild sore throat with a parched feeling, especially in the mornings. This often responds to humidification of bedroom air and increased liquid intake. Patients with a chronic stuffy nose, causing mouth breathing, also suffer with a dry throat. They need examination and treatment of the nose.

An occasional cause of morning sore throat is regurgitation of stomach acids up into the back of the throat where they are extremely irritating. This can be avoided if you tilt your bedframe so that the head is elevated four to six inches higher than the foot. You should also avoid eating and drinking for one to two hours before retiring. You might find antacids helpful. If these fail, see your doctor.

Industrial pollutants and chemicals in the air can irritate the nose and throat, but by far the most common and pervasive air pollutant is tobacco smoke. It cannot be tolerated by many persons who are either allergic or over sensitive to its contents. Other irritants include smokeless tobacco, alcoholic beverages, and spicy foods.

A person who strains his voice (yelling at a sports event, for example) gets a sore throat not only from muscle strain, but also from the rough treatment of his throat membranes. Well-trained, experienced public speakers and singers learn not to abuse their throats and voices in this way. They produce loud voices by taking deep breaths and using their chest and abdominal muscles more than their throat muscles.

Tumors : Tumors of the throat, tongue and larynx (voice box) are usually (but not always) associated with long time use of tobacco and alcohol. Sore throat and difficult swallowing - sometimes with pain radiating to the ear - may be symptoms of such a tumor. More often the sore throat is so mild or so chronic that it is hardly noticed. Other important symptoms include hoarseness, a lump in the neck, unexplained weight loss and/or spitting up blood in the saliva or phlegm.