

STREP VS. SORE:

YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THROAT INFECTIONS

Sore throats are a common ailment, but not all are created equal. This comprehensive guide will help you distinguish between strep throat and viral sore throats, understand their symptoms, and know when to seek medical attention.

1. What is strep throat?

Strep throat is a bacterial infection caused by group A Streptococcus bacteria.

It's highly contagious and can cause significant discomfort.

2. What are the common symptoms of strep throat?

Common symptoms include:

- Sudden onset of sore throat
- Pain when swallowing
- Fever (usually 101°F or higher)
- Red and swollen tonsils, sometimes with white patches or streaks of pus
- Tiny red spots on the roof of the mouth
- Swollen lymph nodes in the front of the neck
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting (especially in younger children)
- Body aches



3. How does strep throat differ from a viral sore throat?

While both can cause discomfort, there are key differences:

Strep Throat:

- Sudden onset of sore throat
- Fever
- White patches on tonsils
- No cough

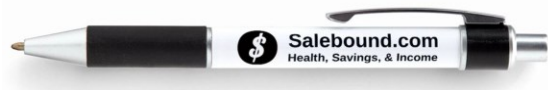
Viral Sore Throat:

- Gradual onset
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Hoarseness
- Red, irritated eyes



4. How is strep throat diagnosed?

DIAGNOSIS TYPICALLY INVOLVES A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION
FOLLOWED BY A RAPID ANTIGEN DETECTION TEST (RADT) OR
A THROAT CULTURE.



5. What is the best treatment for strep throat?

Antibiotics are the primary treatment for strep throat. Penicillin or amoxicillin is typically prescribed. For those allergic to penicillin, alternatives include cephalexin, clarithromycin, azithromycin, or clindamycin.

6. Are there effective home remedies for strep throat?

While antibiotics are necessary to treat the infection, several home remedies can help alleviate symptoms:

- Over-the-counter pain relievers (ibuprofen or acetaminophen)
- Gargling with warm salt water
- Drinking warm liquids (tea with honey)
- Using a humidifier
- Resting to allow your body to fight the infection

7. How long is strep throat contagious?

Strep throat is highly contagious until symptoms resolve. However, antibiotic treatment can reduce contagiousness after 12-24 hours.





8. When should I see a doctor for a sore throat?

See a doctor if you experience:

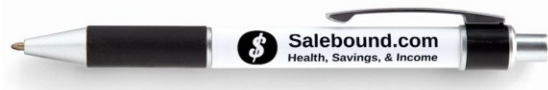
- Sore throat lasting longer than a week
- Difficulty swallowing or breathing
- Fever higher than 101°F
- Rash
- Joint pain
- Earache
- Blood in saliva or phlegm



9. Can strep throat lead to complications if left untreated?

Yes, potential complications can include:

- Rheumatic fever
- Kidney inflammation
- Abscesses around the tonsils
- Sinusitis
- Ear infections



10. How can I prevent strep throat?

Prevention methods include:

- Practicing good hand hygiene
- Avoiding sharing personal items
- Covering your mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Staying home when sick to prevent spreading the infection



11. Is strep throat more common in children?

Yes, strep throat is more common in children aged 5-15. However, it can affect people of all ages.

12. Can strep throat resolve on its own without antibiotics?

While strep throat can resolve without antibiotics, treatment is recommended to prevent complications and reduce the duration of symptoms.

REMEMBER, WHILE THIS GUIDE PROVIDES GENERAL INFORMATION, ALWAYS CONSULT WITH A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL FOR PERSONALIZED MEDICAL ADVICE AND TREATMENT.

#StrepThroat #SoreThroatRelief #HealthFAQs #ThroatHealth #WhenToSeeADoctor