



Scarlet Fever

What is it?

Scarlet fever is a bacterial infection caused by Group A Streptococcus which is commonly found on the throat and skin and also causes strep throat. Symptoms include a sore throat, tonsillitis, fever and a fine, red skin rash. It is most common in children aged 5 to 18 years old but adults can also become infected.

Signs and Symptoms?

Scarlet fever usually begins with a red, sore throat with white patches, similar to strep throat, a high fever, a red, swollen *strawberry* tongue, nausea, and sometimes vomiting. A fine, red, pinpoint rash (normal bumps on the tongue look bigger) (that feels like sandpaper) appears within two days after the sore throat and fever. The rash most often appears on the neck, chest, under the arms, elbow, groin and on the inner surfaces of the thighs. The face is flushed, but free of rash, and the area around the mouth is pale. The rash fades when you press the skin, which peels off sometimes in large sections, especially on the palms and soles. There may also be a reddish rash on the inside of the mouth.

How is it spread?

It is spread by contact with other people's infected respiratory secretions.

What is the incubation period?

The usual incubation period (time from exposure to the appearance of symptoms) is one to four days, but can sometimes be as long as seven days.

A person is considered infectious until 24 hours after beginning antibiotics. Anyone who is untreated is probably infectious for about three weeks.

What is the recommended absence?

After 24 hours of antibiotics and as soon as they have no fever and feel well, persons can return to school or daycare. Scarlet fever is reportable to schools and daycares.



Reference

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/infectious-diseases/scarlet-fever-fact-sheet.html>

aboutkidshealth.ca

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www.hnhss.ca

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