

Sore Throat

A sore throat is most often (85-90% of the time) caused by a virus. Sore throats due to a virus are self-limited with symptoms typically lasting 5-6 days. Symptoms of an upper respiratory tract infection (nasal congestion, runny nose, and cough) often develop within 2-3 days after onset of the sore throat. Self-limited infections can be treated without seeing a medical provider.

Symptoms:

- ✓ Sore throat
- ✓ Swollen lymph nodes (glands) in the neck
- ✓ Fever up to 102 degrees Fahrenheit
- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Muscle aches
- ✓ Nasal congestion, runny nose, cough within 2-3 days

Self-care measures:

- ✓ Rest
- ✓ Drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids
- ✓ Use saline nose drops to loosen mucus
- ✓ Use Ibuprofen (Advil®) 600 mg every 6-8 hours or Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) 650 mg every 6 hours as needed to reduce fever/discomfort
- ✓ Gargle with salt water and use throat sprays/lozenges (containing Benzocaine) for throat pain

Limit spread to others:

- ✓ Avoid intimate contact and sharing cups and utensils
- ✓ Cover all coughs
- ✓ Stay home and away from others until fever-free for more than 24-hours (temperature should be less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit without medication)
- ✓ Wash hands frequently
- ✓ Wear a mask

When to seek care from a medical provider:

- ✓ Fever over 102 degrees Fahrenheit
- ✓ Fever over 101 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 3 days
- ✓ Unable to swallow your oral secretions (spit)
- ✓ Significant/worsening swelling of only one tonsil
- ✓ Sore throat does not improve over 2-3 days and you do not have a runny nose, congestion, or cough

Special note: Strep tests are less reliable until 24-hours after onset of sore throat. In order to provide you with the most reliable care, SHCC does not recommend a strep test until you have had a sore throat for more than 24-hours