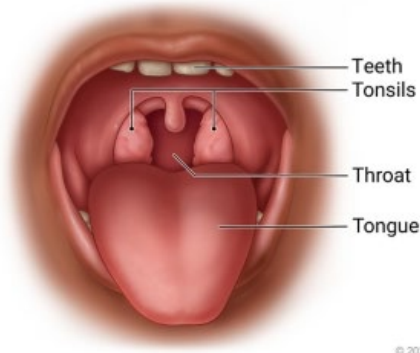


Sore Throat - Adult

Key Points:

In general, sore throats are caused by swelling and inflammation in the throat. The most common types of sore throats are:

- Pharyngitis- affecting the back of the throat and tongue
- Tonsillopharyngitis- affects the throat and tonsils



What Causes a Sore Throat?

- Viral Illnesses such as the flu, mononucleosis, and the common cold
- Bacterial infections such as strep throat
- Mucus that drains from the sinuses
- Drinking alcohol or smoking
- Breathing polluted air
- Seasonal or other allergies
- Acid reflux
- Pieces of food collecting at the tonsils
- Certain immune or inflammatory problems

These instructions are not intended to be all-inclusive and may not cover all possibilities. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your doctor, Health 811 at 1 (866) 797-0007, or return to the Emergency Department.



Signs and Symptoms of a Sore Throat:

- Difficulty swallowing
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Fever
- Enlarged lymph nodes in the neck
- Hoarse voice, cough or problems breathing
- Red or irritated looking throat
- Enlarged or swollen tonsils
- White patches on or near the tonsils

Diagnosis and Treatment

A doctor will determine what is most likely causing the sore throat by asking about symptoms and doing a physical exam. If necessary, the doctor may do a throat swab.

If the doctor determines that the cause is a bacteria (e.g. Strep throat), antibiotics will be needed.

It is important to take the medication as prescribed **until it is finished**, even if your symptoms go away.

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Try throat lozenges to relieve symptoms
- Get plenty of rest
- Take over-the-counter pain relievers such as acetaminophen (Tylenol Sore Throat®) or ibuprofen (Motrin IB®, Advil®)

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Sore Throat - Adult

Return to Emergency Department or call 911 immediately if:

- You develop severe difficulty breathing
- You have difficulty or severe pain when swallowing (you may notice excessive drooling)
- Signs of dehydration such as very dark urine, no urine, sunken eyes, dizziness

See your primary care provider or return to the Emergency Department if you develop:

- A new or worsening fever
- New or worsening ear pain, sinus pain, or headache
- A stiff neck
- Painful lumps in the back of the neck
- Lymph nodes that are getting larger
- New rash or other symptoms that are getting worse
- If symptoms don't start to improve after 2-3 days



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