

CHILDREN
WITH

inflammation of the throat



Children with **inflammation of the throat**

General information:

Inflammation of the throat is a common infection of the airways caused either by a virus or by bacteria which cause an irritation of the throat – especially on or around the tonsils.

The diagnosis is based on the symptoms and on a swab taken from the throat. Inflammation of the throat may also occur in connection with other conditions such as influenza, mononucleosis and scarlet fever, and may in rare cases lead to an abscess in the throat, inflammation of the middle ear and/or sinusitis. The condition usually lasts from 4 to 10 days.

How is it contracted?

Viruses and bacteria occur in the child's mucus and spittle, and infection occurs by inhaling small droplets, e.g. from sneezing and/or from contact with hands, toys, toothbrushes, etc., which have been contaminated with mucus or spittle. It takes about 2-4 days, sometimes less, for the symptoms to appear after the child has been infected.



Symptoms:

The symptoms vary from child to child, but typically the child will have a sore throat, red swollen tonsils, and will find it painful to swallow. If the infection is caused by a virus, the symptoms are generally milder.

Virus infection:

Other typical symptoms include:

- Common cold with a runny nose and irritated cough
- Aching muscles
- Stomach ache
- Headache
- Generally feeling unwell
- Bad breath.

Bacteria infection:

Other typical symptoms include:

- Fever
- Swollen, sore lymph nodes on the neck
- Pain radiating out to the ears

Good advice:

- Offer the child plenty to drink – including hot drinks and soup
- You can also give the child pain relieving medication as agreed with a doctor
- Offer the child soft food without hard crusts – preferably its favourite dishes
- Make sure your child is not too warm if it runs a fever

- Avoid passive smoking. Tobacco smoke increases and maintains the risk of irritation of the airways and can lead to more infections.

When to see a doctor?

Contact a doctor if the child:

- refuses to drink and cannot pee
- has difficulty breathing
- makes you worry and you feel insecure

Contact your general practitioner first because he/she knows your child better than the doctor on call. You can also get good advice and guidance from your health visitor.

Treatment:

If the infection is caused by a virus, it will not be treated with medicine. The only thing you can do is to relieve the symptoms (see “good advice”).

If the infection is caused by bacteria, antibiotics can be prescribed. As it probably hurts to swallow, you can give the child painkillers as agreed with a doctor.

Childcare:

The child can return to childcare when the fever has gone and the child feels well again.

Parental guidelines

These guidelines have been prepared by a working group set up by the departments of paediatrics in Herning, Randers, Skejby and Viborg.

The intention with these guidelines is to provide parents with advice across the following sectors: health visitors, general practitioners family doctors, doctors on call, and the staff at paediatric admission wards in the Central Denmark Region.

The parental guidelines can be seen and downloaded from the internet on the web site www.fv.rm.dk

You may order additional copies from Rikke Dalsgaard,
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