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SCARLET FEVER

What is scarlet fever?

Scarlet fever is a strep throat infection with a rash. The rash is caused by a toxin that is produced by some strep bacteria.

If your child has scarlet fever:

- Your child's skin looks red or sunburned and feels rough. If you look closely, the redness is speckled (tiny pink dots).
- Your child has more redness in skin folds (especially the groin, armpits, and elbow creases).
- Your child has a reddened face and is pale around the mouth.
- Your child has a sore throat and fever (usually before the rash appears).

How can I take care of my child?

- **Give antibiotics.** Your child's medicine is _____. Give _____, _____ times a day during waking hours for 10 days.
- **Help sore throat pain and fever.** Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) is very helpful for throat pain. Children over 1 year old can sip warm chicken broth or apple juice. Children over 4 years old can suck on hard candy or lollipops. Also give acetaminophen or ibuprofen for fevers over 102°F (39°C).
- **Do not treat the rash.** The rash itself needs no treatment. It generally clears in 4 to 5 days.
- **Keep from spreading the disease.** Your child can no longer spread scarlet fever to other children after he or she has been taking the antibiotic for 24 hours.
- **Get throat cultures for the family.** Scarlet fever and strep throat can spread to others in the family. Any child or adult who lives in your home and has any of the symptoms (fever, sore throat, runny nose, headache, vomiting, sores, or who doesn't want to eat) should have a throat culture. If one of your family gets these symptoms in the next 5 days, they should also get a throat culture. In most homes, only the people who are sick need throat cultures. Your physician will call you if any of the cultures are positive for strep.

Call the office right away if:

- Your child starts acting very sick.

Call the office during office hours if:

- The fever lasts over 48 hours after starting the antibiotic.
- You have other concerns or questions.