

CANNON FALLS AREA SCHOOLS

Health Office

Dear Parent/Guardian: There is a child in your child's class who has been diagnosed with strep throat.

STREPTOCOCCAL SORE THROAT/SCARLET FEVER

Streptococcal sore throat (strep throat) and scarlet fever (a strep throat with a rash) are common infections in young children. These illnesses are usually not serious; however, complications such as rheumatic fever (which can damage heart valves) or kidney disease may rarely develop if children do not receive proper antibiotic treatment.

CAUSE: *Streptococcus* bacteria (Group A beta-hemolytic strep)

SYMPTOMS: Sudden onset of fever, sore throat, and swollen glands. Nausea and vomiting may occur with severe cases. With scarlet fever, a very fine raised rash (feels like sandpaper) is present. The rash blanches with pressure. The rash appears most often on the neck, chest, in folds of armpit, elbow, groin, and in the inner thigh. Later on, there may be peeling of the skin on the fingertips and toes.

SPREAD: When an infected person coughs or sneezes, contaminated droplets are passed through the air and inhaled by others. A person can also get infected from touching these secretions and then touching his/her mouth or nose.

INCUBATION: It usually takes two to five days from the time a person is exposed until symptoms develop.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD: Until 24 hours after treatment begins.

EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL: Until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins and until child is without fever for 24 hours.

PREVENTION/CONTROL:

1. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after contact with secretions from the nose and mouth.
2. If your child develops a sore throat and other symptoms listed above, keep him/her home and call your healthcare provider.
3. Diagnosis: Confirmed by identification of strep in throat, either by throat culture or by rapid strep testing, which can provide results the same day.
4. Treatment: If the culture or rapid strep test is positive, a penicillin shot or antibiotics taken by mouth are prescribed. Antibiotics should be taken for the prescribed amount of time to prevent more serious illness, such as rheumatic fever. For more information, your or your healthcare provider may call your local health department,