

7th December 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: Strep A

You will be aware that there has been an increase in the 'Strep A' cases which have been reported in the press recently and we would like to share with you the key symptoms to look out for. This information has been taken from the NHS online guidance.

Group A Streptococci (GAS) are a type of bacteria. Many people carry these bacteria harmlessly in their throat or on their skin, and have no symptoms of illness. Infection occurs when people with GAS develop symptoms, GAS infection is contagious.

The most common symptoms of GAS infection are:

Mild sore throat or a skin infection called Impetigo. There may also be flu like symptoms or muscle tenderness.

GAS and Scarlet Fever

Sometimes, GAS can cause Scarlet Fever. Symptoms include a sore throat, headache, and fever, along with a fine, pinkish or red body rash with a tiny, rough pimples ("sandpapery" feel). On darker skin the rash can be more difficult to see but the skin will have a sandpapery feel. They might have a very red tongue or lips.

Contact NHS 111 or your GP if you are worried your child has Scarlet Fever, because early treatment of Scarlet Fever with antibiotics is important to reduce the risk of complications such as pneumonia or a bloodstream infection. If your child is not too sick, these antibiotics can safely be given by you at home. If your child has Scarlet Fever, keep them at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others.

Most children with GAS throat infection or Scarlet Fever will get better with antibiotics. Unfortunately, very occasionally some children become unwell later because their body produces an exaggerated immune response, or the bacteria gets into the blood stream and causes a more severe infection (called "invasive GAS" or iGAS).

As a parent or carer, if you feel that your child seems seriously unwell, or is becoming more unwell even if they are on treatment or have recently finished antibiotics, you should trust your own judgement.

Contact NHS 111 or your GP if your child is getting worse despite paracetamol or ibuprofen if:

- the temperature has lasted more than 5 days
- your child is feeding or eating much less than normal, especially if they are drooling or appear in pain when swallowing
- your baby has had a dry nappy for 12 hours or more, or is crying without tears or your child shows other signs of dehydration feeling thirsty (dark yellow, strong-smelling pee; peeing less often than usual; feeling dizzy or lightheaded; feeling tired; a dry mouth, lips and tongue; sunken eyes (dark circles under eyes)

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- your baby is under 3 months and has a temperature of 38°C, or is older than 3 months and has a temperature of 39°C or higher
- your baby feels hotter than usual when you touch their back or chest, or feels sweaty
- your child is drowsy (much more sleepy than normal) or irritable (unable to settle them with cuddles, toys, TV or snacks – especially if they remain drowsy or irritable despite any fever coming down)

Call 999 or go to A&E if:

- your child is having difficulty breathing – you may notice grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs or using their neck muscles to breathe
- there are long pauses (more than 10 seconds) when your child breathes
- your child's skin, tongue or lips are blue
- your child feels very cold or clammy to touch
- your child is difficult to wake up or keep awake
- your child has severe pains in their arms, legs neck or back
- your child has a painful, red area of skin, especially if it is getting bigger quickly

How the spread of GAS can be prevented?

Wash hands thoroughly in hot soapy water and dry them, after contact with a person who has been diagnosed with GAS Infection.

If you have a GAS infection try to stay away from people with weakened immunity until you have had antibiotics for more than 24 hours.

Children with a GAS infection should not attend school until they have had antibiotics for at least 24 hours or until they are feeling well enough to be in school.

We hope that this information is useful. Please report any cases using email to info@airedaleacademy.com

Yours sincerely



L Proctor
Principal