

Scarlet Fever

This leaflet offers more information about Scarlet Fever. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your child's care.

What is Scarlet Fever?

Scarlet Fever is a bacterial infection that affects children. It is caused by the streptococcus bacteria which are found in our throats and on our skin.

Scarlet Fever is easily treated with antibiotics. If antibiotic treatment is started early, the chance of children developing complications is rare.

What are the signs and symptoms?

- Sore throat
- Flushed cheeks
- Red, swollen tongue
- Fever
- Typical red, rough (sandpaper) rash appears a couple of days after the sore throat.
The rash often starts on the chest and stomach before spreading to the rest of the body.

Does my child need any tests to confirm the diagnosis?

The doctor will usually be able to diagnose scarlet fever by seeing the typical rash and hearing what symptoms your child has. A swab from your child's throat may be taken. This will be sent to the laboratory to see if the streptococcus bacteria grow. Your doctor may start treatment while waiting for the result of this swab.

What treatments are available?

Scarlet fever is easily treated with antibiotics. Liquid penicillin is often used to treat children. These **must** be taken for seven days, even though most people get better after four to five days.

Your child will still be infectious for 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has started and they shouldn't attend nursery or school during this period.

What happens if I do not get treatment?

Without antibiotic treatment, your child will be infectious for one to two weeks after they became unwell. Rare, but serious complications (rheumatic fever, pneumonia and sepsis) are more likely to occur if antibiotics are **not** taken.

Is there anything I can do to help my child?

- Encourage them to drink a lot
- Give paracetamol for fever if your child is upset
- Use calamine lotion to soothe itchy skin.

How to prevent spread?

- Encourage coughing and sneezing into tissues and wash hands after sneezing and coughing
- Keep children off school for 24 hours after starting antibiotics (or two weeks if antibiotics are not used)
- Avoid sharing bed linen, towels, clothes, drinks with people with scarlet fever.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.

