



August 18, 2023

Dear Early Childhood Education Center Families,

The letter is to inform you that a child at the ECEC was recently diagnosed with strep throat. Please take these precautions: Watch your child for signs of sore throat and other signs of strep (headache, fever, stomach ache, rash, and swollen and tender neck glands). If your child develops a sore throat and any of these signs, see your healthcare provider and tell them that another student at ECEC has strep. Ask to have your child tested for strep throat. *Please inform the ECEC if your child is diagnosed with strep infection.*

What is strep throat? It's an infection in the throat and tonsils caused by group A Streptococcus bacteria. People with strep throat usually have a very red, painful throat, often with fever, and sometimes with headache, abdominal pain, and nausea and/or vomiting. Most sore throats, however, are caused by viruses and are not treated with antibiotics.

How do you get strep throat? Strep throat can affect persons of any age but is most common in children. The bacterium is spread through contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze. If you touch your mouth, nose, or eyes after touching something that has these droplets on it, you may become ill. People with strep throat are generally most infectious when they have symptoms present. They continue to be infectious until they have received treatment and complete 24 hours of the prescribed medication.

How is it diagnosed? A lab test, such as a throat culture or a rapid test, is needed to confirm strep infection.

How is it treated? Strep infections are usually treated with an oral antibiotic, starting either with characteristic symptoms or after a positive strep test. Sometimes an injection of antibiotic may also be used to treat strep.

Why is it important that your child receive treatment? Treatment reduces spread. If not treated or not treated long enough, your child may continue to spread the infection to other members of your family or to other children. Also, treatment with antibiotics can usually prevent rheumatic fever or other rare, but possible dangerous complications. Rarely, some children with strep throat can develop complications like blood infections or rheumatic fever, which can damage the heart or joints.

When can your child come back to school? Children with strep infections may return to school after taking medicine for at least 24 hours and their fever is gone.

How do you stop the spread of strep throat?

- Thoroughly wash hands (yours and your child's) after wiping noses and before eating/preparing food.
- Wash dishes carefully in hot, soapy water or in a dishwasher
- Don't allow food sharing or the sharing of cups, spoons, or toys that are put in the mouth.
- Cover mouth with coughing or sneezing.

If you have any questions, please call the ECEC Health Office at 480-362-2254/2210 or the Health and Nutrition Coordinator at 480-362-2206. Learn more at www.cdc.gov/dotw/strepthroat/index.html.

Respectfully,

Tami Brungard, Early Childhood Education Leader



Information adapted from *Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools: A Quick Reference Guide*. American Academy of Pediatrics.