



Self-care Information

Sore Throat

Tips on how you can self manage a sore throat in adults & children

“Supporting you to look after you and your family”

Key advice:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Eat soft or cool foods.
- Suck ice cubes, or hard sweets (Not suitable for young children).
- Gargle with warm, salty water (Not suitable for children).
- Take simple pain relief like paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- Ask you local pharmacy for advice on other things you could buy to help with the pain.

Sore throats are very common. They normally get better by themselves, and are usually nothing to worry about.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of a sore throat might include:

- A dry, scratchy throat.
- Pain in the throat when swallowing.
- Bad breath.
- Swollen glands in your neck.
- Redness at the back of your mouth.
- A mild cough.

Did you know?

You can buy cheaper non-branded alternatives of lozenges and throat sprays from a pharmacy or local supermarket.

Sore throats are usually caused by viruses, and do not normally need antibiotics.

On rare occasions a sore throat may be caused by a bacteria, such as tonsillitis or Strep Throat.

Bacterial infections may need antibiotics from your GP.



A pharmacist can also provide other treatments if you need them, without seeing a GP. Ask your pharmacist about Pharmacy First.

Please see the next page for tips on how you can help relieve your symptoms.



Let your pharmacist know if you take any other medicines, or if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, as this may affect which treatments you can use safely.

You could try

- ✓ Sucking ice cubes, ice lollies or hard sweets. **Do not give anything small and hard to young children, there is a risk of choking.**
- ✓ Drinking plenty of water.
- ✓ Eating cool or soft foods.
- ✓ Rest.
- ✓ Gargling with warm, salty water. **(Don't try this with children)**
- ✓ Asking your pharmacist for advice on ways to relieve the pain such as:
 - ◇ Paracetamol or ibuprofen.
 - ◇ Medicated lozenges.
 - ◇ Sprays to help with the pain.



Try not to

- ✗ Smoke, or go to smoky places.



See your GP if:

- Your sore throat does not improve after a week.
- You get a sore throat often.

Get advice from 111 if:

- You have a sore throat and a very high temperature, or feel hot and shivery.
- You have a weakened immune system.
- You are worried about your sore throat.
- You have a sore throat with a rash or bruising.
- You take a medicine that may cause a low white blood cell count (ask your pharmacist if you are not sure).

Call 999 if you or your child:

- Have difficulty breathing, or can't swallow.
- Are drooling (This can be a sign of not being able to swallow properly).
- Are making a high-pitched sound when you breathe.
- Have severe symptoms and are getting worse quickly.

Here are some useful links to further information

NHS Website	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sore-throat/
Patient Website	https://patient.info/ears-nose-throat-mouth/sore-throat-2
Or visit your local pharmacy for advice	

