

County of Santa Clara
Public Health Department



Communicable Disease Prevention and Control
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EXPOSURE NOTICE: STREP THROAT/SCARLET FEVER

Date Issued: _____

Dear Parent, Legal Guardian, or Staff,

Students and staff may have been recently exposed to **strep throat/scarlet fever**. We are providing the information below so you know what steps you can take to protect yourself and others. This information does not replace talking with your doctor if you become sick. ***If you or your child have symptoms, please seek diagnosis and treatment from a healthcare provider as soon as possible.***

STREP THROAT/SCARLET FEVER: Illnesses caused by very contagious bacteria called group A strep bacteria. They are most common in children 5 through 15 years old, and can be treated with antibiotic medicine.

What are the symptoms? Both illnesses can cause fever, pain when swallowing, sore throat, and red, swollen tonsils. In addition, symptoms of scarlet fever include a “strawberry” (red and bumpy) tongue and a red rash that may feel like sandpaper. Rash commonly occurs on neck, chest, armpits, and/or groin area.

How is it spread? By breathing in droplets that spread through the air when an infected person talks, coughs, or sneezes. The virus can also be spread through direct contact with the saliva or mucus of an infected person or touching surfaces that have the virus on them.

When do symptoms start? 2 to 5 days after exposure to the bacteria.

Do staff or children need to stay home if symptoms develop? Yes.

When can staff or children go back to work, school, or childcare? The child or staff member can return when they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine and 24 hours have passed after starting antibiotic treatment.

For additional information, visit [cdc.gov/groupastrep](https://www.cdc.gov/groupastrep).