

The Haven Practice

SORE THROAT

Sore throats are usually caused by viruses causing inflammation in your throat. They often occur as part of a cough or cold infection. Sometimes, the infection can affect your tonsils. Antibiotics will not help a viral infection and even in the case of a bacterial infection; antibiotics only shorten the illness by a day. A sore throat will usually be better within a week.

You may be more prone to recurrent sore throats if you:

- Smoke
- Have gum disease
- Breathe through your mouth
- Have chronic sinusitis

Symptoms:

- Sore throat, especially when swallowing
- Mild temperature under 38C
- Tender enlarged glands in your neck
- Earache
- Enlarged tonsils
- Red throat or white spots on tonsils

Self Help:

- Rest
- Try sucking on ice to ease pain
- Gargle with salt water
- Wear a scarf, (not in bed) particularly if you have earache as well
- Warm honey and lemon drinks can be soothing

Medicines:

Local anaesthetic sprays or lozenges can help to ease the pain. Take regular pain killers such as Ibuprofen and/or Paracetamol. Increase your fluid intake if you have a temperature.

Complementary:

As with a cold Vitamin C or Echinacea may shorten the illness.

Complications of a sore throat:

- See the Doctor urgently if you can not swallow your own saliva or you feel that you are not able to breathe normally
- Any sore throat symptoms that lasts longer that a week in children and 10 days in an adult
- Fever that lasts longer that 3 days