

Sore Throat

- A sore throat is most often (85-90% of the time) caused by a virus.
- Sore throats due to a virus are self-limited with symptoms typically lasting 5-6 days.
- Symptoms of an upper respiratory tract infection (nasal congestion, runny nose, and cough) often develop within 2-3 days after onset of the sore throat.
- Self-limited infections can be treated without seeing a medical provider.



Symptoms:

- Sore throat
- Swollen lymph nodes (glands) in the neck
- Fever up to 102 degrees Fahrenheit
- Fatigue
- Muscle aches
- Nasal congestion, runny nose, cough within 2-3 days

Self-care measures:

- Rest
- Drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids
- Use Ibuprofen (Advil®) 600 mg every 6-8 hours or Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) 650 mg every 6 hours as needed to reduce fever/discomfort
- Gargle with salt water and use throat sprays/lozenges (containing Benzocaine) for throat pain
- Use UHC self-care guidelines for symptoms of Upper Respiratory Tract Infection as needed

Limit spread to others:

- Wash hands frequently
- Avoid intimate contact
- Cover your cough and sneezes using the crook of your elbow
- If you have a fever- stay home and away from others until fever free for more than 24-hours (temperature should be less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit without medication)

When to seek care from a medical provider:

- Fever over 102 degrees Fahrenheit
- Fever over 101 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 3 days
- Unable to swallow your oral secretions (spit)
- Significant/worsening swelling of only one tonsil
- Sore throat does not improve over 2-3 days and you do not have a runny nose, congestion, or cough

Special note:

- Strep tests are less reliable until 24-hours after onset of sore throat. In order to provide you with the most reliable care the UHC does not recommend a strep test until you have had a sore throat for more than 24-hours.