Hello Parents,

**This is an important health notification.**

There has been multiple cases of Strep Throat reported in your child’s classroom.
Please, if your child is experiencing difficulty/pain when swallowing, a fever, or reddish rash on their trunk, schedule an appointment with your physician or visit your local health clinic for a screening.

**What is Strep Throat?**
Strep Throat is caused by a streptococcal bacterial infection in the throat. Strep bacteria can lead to serious illness if improperly diagnosed (Scarlet Fever).

**What are the symptoms of Strep Throat?**
If your child has any of the following symptoms, it is time to call the pediatrician to have a throat culture performed:

* Swollen lymph nodes especially in the neck or on their stomach
* Fever of above 101°F
* Swollen “beefy” tonsils and/or green or yellow pus on the tonsils
* Small red dots and/or white spots on the back of the tongue, roof of mouth, and tonsils
* Any of these symptoms, along with difficulty swallowing
* Red rash over the torso of the body (Scarlet Fever)
* Bright red “strawberry tongue”. (Scarlet Fever)

Strep throat usually does **not** occur with cold symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, or a runny or stuffy nose. The more cold-like symptoms experienced, the less likely it is that your sore throat is a strep infection.

**How is it spread?**Strep spreads through airborne droplets when someone with the infection coughs or sneezes, or through shared food or drinks.

**How is it treated?**
Your health provider can write a prescription for antibiotics\* to treat strep throat.  **Your child must be taking antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school.**You can also help to sooth your child’s throat by having them drink warm liquids, use throat sprays and throat lozenges. Also avoid sugary drinks, and allergens.

**Guidelines for returning to school:
Your child must be absent for the first 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.**

**Strep virus is most contagious during the first day of antibiotic treatment.**

Your child must be without fever for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication. Please, ensure your child is of good mental focus and physically ready to return to school. A medicated child is not a ‘well’ child. Over-The-Counter medications (Robitussin, Advil, Tylenol, etc.) only treat the symptoms of illness. Many of these medications lose potency and your child may return to their previous state of discomfort.

In order to prevent the spread of **all viruses and bacteria**, always encourage proper 20-second handwashing with soap and water, especially before and after meals, after toileting, and after sneezing and coughing.  Exercise covering noses and mouths when sneezing. Remind children to dispose of tissue properly. Refrain from sharing eating utensils and/or food. Drink plenty of fluids and remember to change out toothbrushes when positive strep infection is present, to avoid reinfection.

  **Strep Throat can cause a more serious infection called Scarlet Fever.**Scarlet Fever bacteria is the same bacteria that causes Strep, however it affects the skin. This reaction is due to an over-reaction to the bacteria. The rash does not blister or weep, but appears like an allergy or sunburn on the torso and limbs. There will be a rapid increase in body temperature (>101.0°F). The skin *may* peel slightly after the rash fades. Scarlet Fever occurs in children who are more reactive to streptococcal bacterial, children with a prolonged strep infection (>7days), or those with weakened immune systems. This condition is more severe for the afflicted than others around them; however it does indicate the presence of contagious strep bacterial.

 **Again, please notify the ICSAtlanta Clinic if your child has Strep Throat or other communicable infection(s).**We want to keep all of our students, staff and community, healthy and ready to learn!

Thank you,
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*\*Overuse or misuse of antibiotics can lead to antibiotic resistance. If you discover you or your child needs antibiotics, take them only as directed until the prescription is complete.*